

*ABRAHAM'S*  
Humble Intercession for *SODOM*,  
AND  
The *LORD'S* gracious Concessions  
in Answer thereunto:

Containing sundry

*MEDITATIONS*

UPON

*GEN. XVIII.* from *VER. XXIII.*

*to the end of the Chapter.*

Wherein many things are spoken of concerning Believers drawing near to God, and the Efficacy of their Prayers; and how they may be Princes and Prevailers with God, and with what boldness they may come before him, and what ground they may get of him by their Prayers, and what sweet communing they have with him.

With sundry other things worthy of our most serious thoughts, helping us to be more Spiritual and Heavenly, which may prepare us for that everlasting Communion and Fellowship that we hope to arrive at, and come to in a blessed state of Glory by Jesus Christ.

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By *SAMUEL WHITING*, Pastor  
of the Church of Christ at *Lyn* in *N. E.*

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*Jam. 5. 16. The effectuall fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.*

*Jam. 2. 23. Abraham was called the friend of God.*

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To the Reader.

**M**Any of the Patriarchs, and other holy men, have been highly honoured and commended in Scripture for their several Excellencies: Abel for his bounty in the service of God, in bringing in his Oblation of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof: and it is therefore called A more excellent Sacrifice then Cain's was, Gen. 4. 4. with Heb. 11. 4. Enoch and Noah for their constant Communion with God, and taking their holy walks and blessed Turns with him in those evil times wherein they lived, Gen. 5. 22, 24. & 6. 9. Isaac for his Chastity, in keeping himself to one wife, whom he did so tenderly love, Gen. 24. 67. Jacob for his Princely Power that he had with God by weeping and supplication, and those holy wrestlings that he had with him, Gen. 32. 24, 28. with Hol. 12. 3, 4. Moses for his Zeal, and familiarity with the Lord and for his Meekness in his own cause, though holy fire for God's, Exod. 32. 19, 20. Num. 7. 8. David for Thankfulness and Pi-

## To the Reader.

The sweet Psalmist of Israel, 2 Sam. 23. 1. Now though all these were famous Believers, and so reported of by God himself, Heb. 11. yet above all, Abraham is most renowned for his Faith, Heb. 11. 8, 9, 10, 17, 18, 19. and in the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians that Paul writ: And this piece that is the subject of these following Meditations, holds out no small part of his Faith, and sweet familiarity, and Prevailing Power that he had with God in the suits that he put up to him, in behalf of those Righteous ones that he thought might be mingled with those vilest of Sinners.

*The main drift of the Discourse, is,*

1. To draw near to God in Prayer in a right manner, that a gracious answer may be given in to our Prayers, that so we may not pray in vain.
2. To discountenance sin, by the destruction that God will bring upon sinners, both here and in another world without Repentance, as we see in Sodom's Example.
3. To bear up the heads and hearts of the Lords Righteous ones, who live among bad Company, that they shall not be burned in their fire, but be instrumental to save the worst of sinners at least from temporal destruction, as long as they continue with them.

To put all Believers upon fervent and importunate Prayer for the worst of men, if any considerable

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considerable number of Righteous ones be found amongst them.

3. To stir up the best to see their own vileness, and to be very humble in drawing near to God when we pray to him.

6. To meditate of Christ's being the Judge of all the Earth, and plead with him to do right as being such a Judge, and to consider what our duty is in our several places, that must one day stand before this Judge.

7. To besiege and beleaguer the Throne of Grace with suit after suit, and to go away with all we can from God that is so ready to hear Prayer, and to go as far as ever we can or dare in asking, and to fear to provoke God then especially when we pray to him, and to desire of God that he would not be angry with us, nor with our Prayers.

8. To go about our ordinary Employments when we have been with God, as he allows, taking in such Cautions as are duely to be observed.

9. To be familiar with God, and to commune sweetly with him in Prayer, as he does with us in his gracious Answers.

Now what help may be afforded to these things, by the following Treatise, is with the Lord to give, and with his Servants to pray for. A Child when lifted up upon a Giants shoulders, may be carried far above his own strength: A withered Hand may be

## To the Reader.

stretched out, if Christ say the word: Weak things the Lord sometimes chuseth, to bring mighty things to pass by. If the Sword of the Lord and of Gideon go together, what may not a little strength do? An Host of three hundred men that lap water, with their Pitchers and Lamps, what an Army of Midianites may not fall before them? I dare not say any thing of the Work, nor of the success of the Work, being in Gods hand; onely I shall pray, That the blessing of the God of Heaven may go along with it, That Christ may smile upon it: and, as Constantine would stoop so low as to kiss Paphnutius his Eye that he could not see with; so, that the Lord Jesus would be pleased to condescend so far as to give a sweet kiss of favour to this maimed work.

I had not thought that any thing of mine should ever have seen the light more; but the short Notes put forth before, concerning that awful Subject of The Last Judgement, finding acceptance with some of the Saints here, and with some elsewhere (though so unworthy of such a tremendous Subject, yet) I have adventured a little before I dye to set forth this, as being the words of a dying man, and of such an one as expects death daily, if so be that such words may sink more deeply. And if any Souls may be prevailed with to get nearer God, and to have more sweet communings with his Majesty, and prevail more (through Christs Intercession) by their faith in Prayer, and thereby declare themselves the true and genuine Children



## To the Reader.

dren of Abraham; and my own heart be carried up more Heaven-ward, and Christ-ward by it, I have enough, and shall judge that I have not lost my labour. No words are lost, no labour lost, that bring us nearer God, and nearer Heaven.

Reader, The brief Heads of the following Discourse, or at least the principal of them, are hinted at in this short Epistle; Reade them, Learn them, Pray for a blessing upon them, distill them into the sweet water of the Practice of Godliness. We know no more than we do. The life of Reading, is in the performance of our duty in what we learn. Words are but empty sounds, except we draw them forth in our lives. Printed Books will do little good, except Gods Spirit print them in our hearts. Gods words written with Ink will not profit, except they be also written with the Spirit of the Living God. They are the blessed ones that know and do, *Joh. 13. 17.* and they ever know most that practise most: A good understanding have all they that do his Commandments, *Psal. 111. 10.* As for Brain-knowledge, it may puff a man up, and so bring him down low to destruction; it may raise him high, that he may have the deeper fall into Hell; it may swell him like a bladder, and when the bladder breaks, then like an unskilful Swimmer, he drowns: It addes more fuell to Hell fire, and causeth him, except he do his Lords will, to be beaten with many stripes, *Luke 12. 47.* What good have the Devils by all their knowledge?  
they

## To the Reader.

*they know enough of the Will of God, but do not any thing of it, and this heats the Furnace for them; and time will come, that many a wicked man will wish that he had never known so much, because he hath done so little: for, it is but Oyl to the flame, Brimstone to the fire, to make them burn more fiercely.*

*One word more, and I have done: If this Discourse of a Subject of this nature may be available for the Salvation of many, or of any, I shall have cause to bless God for ever, and shall with more comfort lay down my head, and rest in the Grave as in a perfumed Bed, through Christ who hath sweetned it by his Buriall, till the Resurrection at the last day.*

Thine in the Lord Jesus,

**Samuel Whiting.**

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A B R A



# ABRAHAM's Humble Intercession for S O D O M;

And the L O R D's gracious Concessions  
in Answer thereunto:

Containing sundry

## MEDITATIONS

U P O N

G E N. XVIII. from Ver. 23. to  
the end of the Chapter.

Ver. 23. And Abraham drew near, and said, wilt thou also  
destroy the righteous with the wicked?

24 Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the City, wilt  
thou also destroy, and not spare the place for the fifty right-  
eous, that are therein?

25 That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the  
righteous with the wicked, and that the righteous should be  
as the wicked, that be far from thee: shall not the Judge  
of all the earth do right?

26 And the LORD said, If I finde in Sodom fifty righteous,  
within the City, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.

27 And Abraham answered, and said, Behold, now, I have  
taken upon me to speak unto the LORD, which am but dust  
and ashes:

- 28 *Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous, wilt thou destroy all the City for lack of five? And he said, If I finde there fourty and five, I will not destroy it.*
- 29 *And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be fourty found there: And he said, I will not do it for fourties sake.*
- 30 *And he said unto him, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there: And he said, I will not do it, if I finde thirty there.*
- 31 *And he said, B hold, now I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenties sakes.*
- 32 *And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for tens sake.*
- 33 *And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.*

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*Verse 23. And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?*

**I**N these words, to the end of the Chapter, we have 1. The Prayer of Abraham in behalf of Sodom, and the rest of the Cities that God destroyed with Fire and Brimstone from Heaven. 2. Gods Answer that he gave to the several Petitions he put up to him in their behalf. 3. The Issue of all, which is set forth in the last Verse of the Chapter.

In the first part we have 1. What Abraham did; He drew near, the Text sayes, ver. 23.  
2. What he said: and therein we have these things considerable;

1. His desire that these sinners might be spared if it were possible, or at least the righteous among them might not be destroyed with the wicked, ver. 23, 25.

2. The Arguments that he useth to prevail with God, that the righteous and the wicked may not be alike: 1. Taken from the strangeness of the act, wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? as if he should say, This would be strange, Lord, and thou wouldst go out of thy wonted way so to do. The 2. is taken from the vehemency of his wish, that such a thing may never be, which he repeats twice, That be far from thee, That be far from thee. The 3. is taken from his honour, as being Judge of all the earth, and therefore for his Name must needs do right: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? ver. 25.

3. We have his wise insinuating himself into the Lord, 1. By going from step to step, and seeking to gain ground of the Lord, going from fifty to five and forty, and from five and forty to forty, and from forty to thirty, and from thirty to twenty, and from twenty to ten. 2. By humbling and abasing himself before the Lord, ver. 27.



*Behold, now I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes.* 3. By desiring the Lord not to be angry with him, for being so bold with him, ver. 30. 4. By his undauntedness in his Suit, ver. 31. *Behold, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord.* 5. By his modest request at last, in speaking but once more; mixed with an holy fear of displeasing him, ver. 32. *Oh let not my Lord be angry, and I will speak but this once.* All this concerns the first part, viz. *Abraham's Prayer.*

In the second part, scil. *Gods Answer*, we have

1. The grace and favour of God towards him

1. In that he never denied him in any one of his Requests, but granted all, from fifty to ten. So that if there had been but ten righteous in the place, it had been spared.

2. In that Abraham left off petitioning, before the Lord left off granting; wherein the exceeding greatness of his grace shewed it self. The truth is, we have done sooner in asking, then God has in giving; our desires are scant, when his heart is large; our requests are short, when his hand is long; we might have more, could we ask more: we spare to speak, and therefore we lose much of what we might carry away with us from such a Bountiful Alimner as God is.

In the last part we have 1. Gods leaving Abraham. 2. Abraham's departing to his place.

Doct. 1. *Believers priviledge in Prayer.* 5

place. 3. *A Description of Prayer, and Gods Answer: He communes with us, and we with Him.*

Doct. I. **T**Hat *Believers in praying to God, draw near to him.*

*Heb. 7. 19. & 10. 22. Jam. 4. 8. Let us draw near with a true heart. Draw nigh to God, viz. in prayer of Faith. He is not far from every one of us, nor we from him; for in him we live, and move, and have our being, Acts 17. 27, 28. but then in a special manner we draw near to him, when we put up our suits and supplications to him. A Suppliant to a Prince does then draw near to him, when he makes his Address, and presents his Suit to him: A Childe draws near to his Father, when he comes to ask something of him: So do we to our Sovereign Prince and Father, when we bring our Petitions to him.*

*For opening of which, let me shew,*

1. *What it is to draw near to God when we pray to him.*

2. *In what manner we are to draw near to him, when we make request to him.*

3. *Why we are thus to draw near to him.*

4. *What use we are to make of it.*

Quest. 1. *What is it to draw near to God in Prayer?*

Ans. 1. *Negatively.* 2. *Affirmatively.*

*Negatively.* 1. It is not to draw near with our lips, when our hearts are far from him, Isa. 29. 13. or as *Jeremy* tells God, Thou art near in their mouth, and far from their reins, Jer. 12. 2. The man is as his heart is, *Solomon* sayes, Prov. 23. 7. If the heart of a man therefore be far from God in Prayer, though he be near with his mouth, he is not near God in the duty. If there be any defect in the chief Wheel of a Clock within, it will not strike right: so if the heart be wanting, which is the chief Wheel to set all a going in the duty of Prayer, there will be no right stroke given: there's no drawing near to God, when the heart is gone: there must be something within, else the duty of Prayer is but a dumb idol.

2. It is not to draw near with multitude of words, as if God made any account of them; he cares not for being loaden with words: they should be few when we pray to him, *Ecclesi.* 5. 2. *Mat.* 6. 7. We may be far from God, when we pour out most words before him. This is not to draw near to God, when we word it with him. Wise men will have us speak in way of suit to them in a few words; so the wise God. Some Princes have thrown away long Petitions; and God as little regards length of Prayers, except there be something else joyned with them.

3. It is not to come with *loud expressions* when we

we pray before him. Loud crying in the ears of God, is not to *draw near to God*: They are nearer God, that silently whisper in his ears, and tell him what they want, and what they would have of him. They have the Kings ear, not that call loudest, but those that *speak softly* to him, as those of the Council and Bed-chamber do: So they are nearest God, and have his ear most, that *speak softly* to him in Prayer. Loud cries of Beggars are not heard of men; no more are they regarded of God, Isa. 1. 15. A man will say sometimes, *I should have heard thee, if thou hadst not spoken so loud*: what may God then say to loud speaking hypocrites?

4. It is not to *speak mournfully* in the ears of God; there are those that are *far from God* that do so. Hos. 7. 14. the Prophet speaks of those that *howled upon their beds, when they cried not to the Lord with their hearts*. They may be *far from God* that mourn in his ears, as if they were near to him. Some are like Stage-players that act the part of *Mourners*, onely when they are before the Lord: these he looks not at as such as *draw near to him*. Even hypocrites may roar as Bears, and mourn sore as Doves, Isa. 59. 11. Every mournful Ditty is not good Musick with men; nor beast-like roaring, Melody in the ears of God.

5. It is not to *seek him when he does afflict them*,

Isa. 26. 16. this is to flatter him with their lips, rather then to draw near to him, Psal. 78. 34, 35, 36. A Slave that cares not to come near to his Master when he is buffeted and beaten, will fall down before him: A Dog when he is cudgelled will crouch before him that smites him. It is a forced drawing near to God, when his hand is lifted up against them; when the Rod and Staff is taken up, then to bow and bend onely, is that that the worst of men will come up to: as we see in Pharaoh, Saul, and many others.

6. It is not to pray to him when it is too late, to seek to him when the date is out. Many shall seek to enter in, sayes Christ, (when they come too late) and shall not be able, Luke 13. 24. The foolish Virgins lost their time, and came too late when the door was shut, Mat. 25. 10, 11, 12. They do not draw near to God that miss the season, that slip the opportunity of coming before him. There is a time when he may be found, Isa. 55. 6. and a time when he will not be found; there is a time when he is nigh, and we may draw nigh to him, ibidi and there is a time when he is far off, and when we cannot draw near to him. They that observe not their time, lose their market among men; and so do they that slack their opportunity, lose this blessed market of trading with God, and drawing near to him.

2. Affirmatively. To draw near to God, is,

1. To



1. To come in *faith* when we pray to him, for that is it that brings us *near* to him, *Heb. 10. 22.* This brings us into the Kings Presence, and lets us have his ear and heart too: *The King hath brought me into his Chambers*, sayes the Spouse, *Cant. 1. 4.* But how? by the foot of *faith* coming to him, *Job. 6. 35.* This is the *Eye* whereby we look upon him, and take our full views of him, and see his beauty, *Isa. 45. 22.* If ever we draw near to God, it is by *Faith*, it ushers us and our prayers into his sweet presence. When *faith* is most upon the wing in prayer, then we are ever nearest God.

2. To draw near to God, is to come in the Name of *Jesus Christ*, and to ask what we pray for, for his sake. *Heb. 7. 19.* The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; whereby we draw nigh to God; that better hope is *Jesus Christ*: All our Spiritual Sacrifices must be offered upon this golden Altar; all our Prayers must be put up in his Name. By him (sayes the Apostle) let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, *Heb. 13. 15.* He it is that hath the golden Censer, and with his much incense offers it with the prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar which is before the Throne, *Revel. 8. 3.* It is by his mediation and intercession that our Prayers come before God, and are accepted. They come to be sweet odours by his incense, *v. 4.* and

and *Rev. 5. 8.* This is to *draw near to God*, to come in *Christ's Name*, *Joh. 14. 13, 14.*

3. To *draw near to God* in Prayer, is to come before him *conscious of our own unworthiness* to sue to him for any thing that we stand in need of, either for our selves or others. They that are Suppliants to Princes, acknowledge their *unworthiness* to come into their Presence, and to put up any *Request* to them. The *Centurion* thought himself not worthy to come to Christ, as well as that he should come *under his roof*, *Luke 7. 6, 7.* and who drew nearer Christ then he? They that see their *unworthiness* to come to pray to God, they of all others *draw nearest to him* when they pray to him.

4. To *draw near to God* in Prayer, is to come before him *sensible of those sins* that we bring into his presence: *Behold, we are before thee in our trespasses*, sayes that holy man, *Ezra 9. 15.* Such as do indeed *draw near to God*, see their persons polluted, their prayers defiled, and both to need *washing in a fountain open for sin and uncleanness*, spoken of *Zech. 13. 1.* As we are *dust* in our original, so we gather *dust and soil* daily, and our *best duties* are rolled in *dust*, our prayers full of corruption, and sullied all over with this *dust and mire*; and every gracious heart sees it, when he *draws nearest* to the Holy One. *Blackness and deformity* is *seen most* before the  
greatest

greatest *beauty*: So when we are nearest the *Beauty of Holiness* that is in God, then our blackness and deformity is most seen by us.

5. To *draw near to God* in Prayer, is to come before him as *eying his All-sufficiency* to do all we come to ask of him, and more too: *Eph. 3. 20.* To him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think, sayes the Apostle. It were a great thing to have all we ask, but much more to have all we think; but to have above both our asking and thinking, and to have exceeding abundantly above these, what an All-sufficient God do we come before when we pray to him? And truly, they that do *draw near to him* will eye him thus, that he can do every thing, *Job 42. 2.* that there's nothing too hard for him, *Gen. 18. 14.* *Jer. 32. 17, 27.* That if a King on Earth can give a City to him that asked but a penny, Oh! what cannot the Royal Majesty of Heaven give!

6. To *draw near to God* in Prayer, is to come before him as *eying his Willingness* to grant, as well as his *All-sufficiency* and Power to yield to our desires. *Psal. 145. 19.* He will fulfil the desires of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them. The Leper here fell short; he believed his power, but doubted of his will, *Mat. 8. 2.* but Christ told him of his will, as well as his power, *ver. 3.* And indeed this is an

an happy thing, to see that there is a *will* in God to give, as well as *power*; for this gives God the glory of his Grace. A Kings grace lies in his Will, and so does Gods.

Quest. 2. *In what manner are we to draw near to God in Prayer?*

Ans. 1. In *sincerity*, with a true heart. *Heb. 10. 22. Let us draw near with a true heart.* Truth is the Christian Souldiers girdle, *Eph. 6. 14.* and girds up the heart, and keeps us up close to the duty, that our affections do not dangle and hang loose in Prayer. *Psal. 17. 1. Hear my prayer, O God, that goeth not out of fained lips:* He would be sincere when he drew near to God in Prayer. It's no time to be false with God, when we come to pray before him. No Prince on Earth would endure a glozing false Suiter; how much less will God endure a false heart when we come to sue to him? Hypocrisie is loathsome at all times, but most of all when we come to pray before the Lord. It's the *Worm in the gourd* that eats up the duty: it's the *Rottuness of the Core* that consumes the fruit of all that we expect to come in by our Prayers: it's the *Moth* that corrupts the heart, and spoils the Petition; the *Caterpillar*, and *Palmer-worm*, and *Canker-worm* that devours all before it. We must be true at all times, much more when we fall upon our knees and pray before the Lord.

2. In *purity*, with cleansed hands and purified hearts. Jam. 4. 8. *draw near to God: but how? cleanse your hands ye sinners, and purifie your hearts ye double-minded.* So Heb. 10. 22. *Let us draw near, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with clean water.* Sanctification in outward and inward man, is required of those that *draw near to God.* As Holiness becomes Gods house for ever, Psal. 93. 5. so it does become the heart of man for ever, especially in time of Prayer. *Also my prayer is pure,* sayes Job, Job 16. 17. A pure heart makes a pure prayer: A pure vessel makes the liquor pure; so does the vessel of the heart if pure, make that we pour out before the Lord pure also.

3. In *humility*: Humble ones draw nearest unto God, for he is ever *nighest* unto them, Psal. 34. 18. Isa. 57. 15. *he dwells with them.* This is that that we have Precept and Example for, 1 Chron. 7. 14. *If my people, &c. shall humble themselves, and pray, &c. Jam. 4. 8, 9.* They that *draw near to God* must be afflicted, and mourn. How humble was holy Agur, Prov. 30. 2. how humble was the Publican in Prayer, Luke 18. 13. how humble was the Prodigal, *I am not worthy to be called thy Son,* Luke 15. 21. An humble heart in Prayer is Gods delight, and will get any thing: he will never send these poor ones away empty.



4. In zeal and fervency: *Rom. 12. 11. Fer-  
vent in Spirit, serving the Lord. So Jam. 5. 16.  
The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man  
availeth much.* This Sacrifice must be offered up  
with fire of the Spirits kindling, not of our own  
it must not be strange fire, as *Levit. 16. 1.* but  
holy fire.

5. Importunately: *Luke 18. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.* So  
*Luke 11. 5, 6, 7, 8.* the Parable of the unjust Judge  
and poor widow, and the history of him that  
came to borrow three Loaves, hold it out that  
we should draw near with holy importunity, and  
impudency, as the Greek word signifies, resolving  
to have no nay. So the woman of *Canan*, how  
importunate was she; she would not give out  
though repulsed often, *Mat. 15.* Some suiters  
will have no nay, some beggars will take no de-  
niall: so here, Ambassadors will not be gone,  
till they have done what they came about. Now  
Prayers are the Souls Ambassadors, that are sent  
to Heaven to negotiate great things with God  
for us, and they will do what they are sent about.  
How impudent, in an holy wise, was *Jacob*, that  
said, *I will not let thee go, except thou bless me,*  
*Gen. 32. 26.*

6. Joyfully: Praying with joy, *Phil. 1. 4.* *Da-  
vid* made many Prayers, that were turned into  
joyful Praises and Thanksgivings ere he had done.  
Trace the *Book of Psalms*, and you shall finde  
many

many Prayers by a *Divine Chymistry* turned into joyful Praises. Those Prayers that are made in faith, have ever joy mixed with them. Faith and Joy, are Cause and Effect, and therefore do mutually argue one another: had we more Faith, we should make more joyful Prayers then we do.

7. *Feelingly*, and from the heart: our prayers must be hearty prayers, *Psal.* 119. 58. & 145. They that use their lips, and have wandering hearts, do not pray in a right manner: God loves no complemental Suiters, but would have the heart given to him; as other wayes, so when we pray to him. There are some eloquent beggars, that will flourish with Rhetorical strains in begging, these speak not feelingly, and from the heart, and no wise men will regard such: so do such as pray not with the heart, but flourish it with high strains of speech before the Lord. We must pray feelingly: heart-prayers are they that God looks for, *Prov.* 23. 26. That man is not serious with God in such a serious work as Prayer is, that leaves his heart behinde him, when he comes to present his Suits before him.

8. *Constantly*: *Rom.* 12. 12. Continuing instant in prayer. *Luke* 18. 1. Christ spake a Parable, to the intent that men should pray alwayes, and not faint. *1 Thess.* 5. 17. Pray without ceasing. The woman of Canaan, as she was importunate,

so she was constant in Prayer, she held out to the last; so *Jacob*. Constancy, as it crowns all other Duties, so in a special manner this of Prayer. Prayer is an holy wrestling, *Gen.* 32. 24. with *Hof.* 12. 3, 4. So *Rom.* 15. 30. Strive, or wrestle together with me in your prayers for me: now if a Wrestler should faint, and give out before the victory, he would lose the Crown; so if we hold not out in Prayer, both our labour is in vain, and another will take the Crown from us.

Quest. 3. Why are we thus to draw near in Prayer?

Ans. 1. From God. 2. From our selves. 3. From the Duty it self.

1. From God: 1. He hath commanded us to draw near to him; he hath given out his *Royal Edict* for it; and when Kings and Princes give out their *Royal Edicts*, all obey: so here, *Jam.* 4. 8. The *Reebabites* obeyed their father in his Commands, *Jer.* 35. 6. how much more should we obey our Father in this?

2. He hath promised to draw near to us, *Jam.* 4. 8. and who would not have God to draw near to him? His Fellowship is the best Fellowship in the world; there's all in his Communion, that is in Father, Friend, Brother, Husband, Lover, and what else you will, and ten thousand thousand times more, and this may well prevail with us.

3. He

3. He hath left us *Examples* in his Word to imitate, of sundry that have thus drawn near to him; as *Abraham*, and *David*, and many others, whose faith we are to follow, and whom to imitate will be our Crown and Glory. To be beset with such Pearls, and follow such peerless ones, will be a glorious Diadem to our head.

4. He denounceth woe to such as do it not: *Zeph. 3. 1, 2. Woe to her that is filthy and polluted; Why, what's the matter? Among other things, this is one thing complained of, she drew not near to her God: See also Jer. 10. 25. Nothing is more loathsome in a wife, then not to come near her husband, and nothing more abominable to God, then for his Spouse not to draw near to him; he looks at such as polluted ones, and as such as are turned aside to some adulterous lovers. Their hearts are gone from him, that draw not near to him.*

2. *From our selves:* 1. We are never better, then when we are nearest God, and when we have most communion with him in this Duty: we are in a corner of Heaven, when God and we are in a corner together; as *Peter* said at Christs Transfiguration, *Master, it is good for us to be here, Mat. 17. 4.* so we may say when we are near God, *It is good to be here*, be the place what it will be: Gods Presence makes any place a Paradise.

2. We are never more honoured, then when we draw near to him. It is an honour to a man to

be admitted into the Kings Presence at any time, but to be very near him, and often with him, is great honour: what is it then to be near God? 1 *Joh.* 1. 3. *Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ:* this is greatest honour indeed. See for illustration 1 *Kings* 4. 5.

3. We are never nearer comfort, then when we are nearest God in this Duty. He is *the God of all comfort*, and therefore when we are near him, we are near comfort, 2 *Cor.* 1. 3. What glorious beams of comfort have been darted into many souls, when they have been darting up their Prayers to heaven, and have been serious with God in the duty? *Heaven* hath been as it were opened to them. If ever comfort meet us, it is when God and we have been together, when he hath met with us, and we with him in Prayer. As *Moses face shone* when he had been with God; so our faces shine most with comfort when we have been with God, *Exod.* 34. 29, 30. As the Nobles of Israel, by being with God, *saw him, and did eat and drink*; that is, were filled with comfort, as if they had been at a feast or banquet, *Exod.* 24. 11. so when we are near God in this duty, it is as a banquet of wine to us.

4. We finde God very tender to us, and passing by failings, and making the best of what we do. There will be wandring thoughts, that like Fowls will fly upon our Spiritual Sacrifices; but if we  
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endeavour to *drive them away*, as *Abraham* did those fowls, *Gen. 15. 11.* God will accept the service for Christs sake, *1 Pet. 2. 5.* though there be something in the Prayer that hath not been well done, yet if God pass by the failing, and say, *It is well done*, who should finde fault with him? if he be tender to us, who can charge him? I remember a story of *Henry the Seventh's* Cup-bearer, that coming to bring a cup of Wine to him, it so fell out that he stumbled and fell, and throw down the glass, and spilt the Wine, and sprinkled some of it upon the Kings garments: the King looked angerly upon him, and asked him, *If he had done well in what he did?* the man answered, *If your Majesty think it well done, it is well done.* Sayest thou so, sayes the King, then I say it is well done; and so pardoned him. I apply it thus: When we are serving God in Prayer, something comes in that marres and spills the Duty, but if God will pass by the slip, and say, *It is well done*, and accept of it, who hath any thing to say against him? And thus of his Free-grace he does, when we would *draw near to him*, and do him *better service*, he knows how to leave the worst, and take the best of our desire, and to make the best of it.

5. We shall finde our *drawing near to God* in this Duty, a *Pledge* of our *everlasting communion* with him in another world. Communion with

God is *Heaven begun*, and it will never cease till it fall into Eternity, as the Rivers do into the Sea. It is true, our Communion with God is *little here*, for what's a little River to the Sea? we are but *now and then*, and but *sometimes*, and but a little serious with him; some acquaintance we have, but not much: but there is a time a coming when *we shall ever be with the Lord*, 1 Thess. 4.17. when we shall see his face, Rev. 22.4. and be with him where he is, Joh. 14.3. & 17.24. and be like to him, and see him as he is. And this everlasting happy Communion follows upon our drawing near to God here.

6. We shall finde, that when we draw nearest unto God we have *most his Image upon us*: for so it is in *Glory*, 1 Joh. 3.2. *We shall be like unto him, for we shall see him as he is*; and so it is in *Grace*, 2 Cor. 3.18. Look as *Moses*, by being with God, brought some of *Heavens beauty* down with him, not onely in his face, but also in his heart, some of the bowels of God toward a sinning people, Exod. 32.31, 32. so it is with those that draw near to God in Prayer, the *Image of God* looks fresh upon them; it is to be seen who they have been with, their *Fathers face* is so conspicuously beheld in them.

3. *From the Duty it self*: 1. It is that that Christ Jesus often exercised himself in, especially upon *weighty occasions*; yea sometimes spent the whole

whole night in Prayer to God, *Luke 6. 12.* and we need not be ashamed to follow him. Souldiers follow their Leader, Sheep the Shepherds: so here, *Joh. 10. 27.* *They follow me.*

2. It is *that* whereby we become *Princes with God*; *Gen. 32. 28.* *Hof. 12. 3, 4.* and who would not prevail with God, though he get an halting by it?

3. It is *that* that makes us prevail with men, *Gen. 32. 28.* If we can but be *Princes with God*, men shall never be too hard for us: *Impotency* shall not overcome, where *Omnipotency* yields.

4. It is *that duty* that gains great things for us. What is it that may not be obtained by Prayer of Faith? it's a *Key* that opens all doors; the door of Heaven, *Jam. 3. 17, 18.* the doors of the Sea, *Exod. 14.* *Neh. 9.* the doors of the barren womb, *1 Sam. 1.* What *Treasures* are there that Prayer cannot come at, fetch away, and bring in its hand to us?

5. It is *that* that God delights in, *Cant. 2. 14.* *Prov. 15. 8.* it is a kinde of *harmony*, and *musick*, and *melody* in his ears. Other fathers love to see their children playing, but our Father loves to see his children praying.

6. It is *that* that we begin our spiritual life with, *Acts 9.* and must not cease with us till we come to glory.

7. It is *that* that will issue in praises in another world: our *Requests* now, will be *Songs* then.

*Use 1. for Information.* 1. We see what *honour* God puts upon Believers when they pray to him, *They draw near to him*. It is great honour to draw near to a Princes Throne, to put up a Petition now and then, and to *stand or kneel* in his Presence: Oh what *honour* then is it to *draw near to God*, and to come to his Throne to present our Supplications before Him who is *King of kings, and Lord of lords*; all are not so dignified, it is the priviledge of *Believers* onely, they are *they* that have this Kings ear and heart, they may come without *check or controll*; it's their honour to be in his Presence, there's no Law to inhibit them from coming, as was sometimes in the great *Persian Monarchs Kingdome*, *Esth. 4. 11.* they may come *when they will*; and as often as they will, this King hath an ear open, and an hand ready to receive their Petitions that they present to him, *1 Joh. 5. 14, 15.* When they come most frequently, they are welcome most cordially; when they *draw near*, as *Abraham* here, they have the honour to *kiss the Kings Hand*, and to come at any time into the Presence-Chamber without reproof. *Such honour have all his Saints*, and so it is with every one that this King delighteth to honour.

2. We see that Believers are *Favourites* and *Friends* of God, that they *draw near to God*. *Abraham* is thrice in Scripture called *the Friend* of  
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of God, 2 Chron. 20. 7. Isa. 41. 8. Jam. 2. 23. and when any thing is often spoken of, God would have us *minde that*. The truth is, none are such friends of God as Believers; nay, none are friends but *they*: To *them* this King holds out the golden Scepter of his Grace. There are some that are said to be *near the King*, Jer. 52. 25. and of Zabud, that he was King Solomons friend, 1 Kings 4. 5. Oh but how *near* are Believers to God, what *friends* are they to him, that may come with their Petitions to him at any time without repulse? No Favourites of Princes have more liberty then *they have*, to come into the Presence of the *greatest Majesty of Heaven*. Julius and Augustus had their Favourites, and so had Tiberius his *Sejanus*, that he did call *Friend*, and would write to him *pro amicitia*, out of the friendship that he bore to him: but none like Believers for friendship and favour with God, that can come with such *boldness* to his *Throne of Grace*, and *draw near* when they pray to him.

3. We see that God *humbleth himself* above all other Princes in the world, that will vouchsafe to admit such as we be into his Presence, and to come so near him. It's great *humility* in the great God, to *behold things that are done in heaven*, to have respect to the service that *Angels* bring before him; but for him to *behold things*



done on earth, to look at our *services* and *prayers*, to regard our *petitions*, and to let us have any room in his *heart*, and our requests to have any admittance to his *Throne*: Oh! *who is like to the Lord that dwelleth on high*, that thus *humbleth himself* for our sakes? *Pf. 113. 5, 6.* Princes will sometimes *stoop* toward their Subjects, as *David* and others have done, but none like God. Some Princes will scarce be seen once in a year of their Subjects, they take such *State* upon them; but our God and King does not so, we may *draw near to him* when we pray to him.

4. We see that by nature we are *far from God*, for it is of faith that we *draw near to him*: by nature we care not for *praying* to him, for it is by grace that we come with our *suits* and *supplications* to him; we may *thank* grace that ever we get near him. Nature puts us far from God, as East and West are in their distances one from another; as soon may *Arctick* and *Antarctick Poles* meet, as God and Nature meet together. *Adam* when fallen would never have come at God, but *hid himself* for ever, if God had not sought him and found him out: So it is with all *Adams Sons*, they would shrowd themselves any where, rather then come where God is. Of all such men it is said, *They call not upon God*, *Pfal. 14. 4.* it is from that which is *supernatural* that we *draw near to him*. There is a *Byass* upon nature

ture that carries us far from God, till another *Byass* bends us strongly towards him.

5. We see how precious Christ should be to us, for he is that *better hope whereby we draw near to God*, Heb. 7. 19. there's no coming to the Father but *by him*, Joh. 14. 6. but *through him we have access by one Spirit unto the Father*, Eph. 3. 18. and who then should be *precious* to us, if not he? 1 Pet. 2. 7. He is the great *Favourite of Heaven*, that brings us all into favour, and brings us *near God*, if ever we get near to him. Favourites of Princes bring others into their Presence: so does *he* bring us into the Presence of God, and makes us and all our Prayers *acceptable*, Eph. 1. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 15. Oh what a price should we set upon him! He should be the *chiefest of ten thousand*, above all other beloveds, Cant. 5. 10. the *Pearl of great price* that we should *sell all for*, Mat. 13. 45, 46. we should have *none in heaven but him*, and *none in the earth that we desire in comparison of him*, Ps. 73. 25. He is the *richest Jewel* in the world, the *fairest Flower* in Gods garden, the *Tree of Life* in the midst of the Paradise of God; the *Sun*, the *bright and Morning Star*, the *Day-spring from on high*, the *Treasure of Heaven*. In a word, He it is by whom we *draw near to God*, and bring our suits before him to finde *acceptance with him*.

6. We see what a precious grace *Faith* is, 2 Pet. 1. 1. not onely because we lay hold upon  
*precious*

*precious Christ* by it for righteousness and life, but because we *draw near to God* by it when we pray to him; and therefore it is, that *faith* is that that makes our prayers for us, next to the *Spirit*, which is the principal Efficient of them, *Rom.* 8.26. The prayer of *faith*, *Jam.* 5.15. and indeed that prayer is *no prayer*, that hath not *faith* in it, though never so well beset with compleat and neat flowers of goodly expressions; these do not take with God, it's *faith* that carries all along sweetly in the duty; that's the *sinews* and *strength*, the *heart* and *life*, the *cream* and *flower*, the *choyce* and *best*, the *marrow* and *farness* of the duty. Oh how precious should we account of it then, and especially because we draw near to God in prayer by it?

*Use 2. for Terrour to Unbelievers:* They cannot *draw near to God*, nor make any prayer to him to finde *acceptance* with him; they may be near him with their lips, but their hearts will be far from him; they may compass him about, but it will be with *lies* and *deceit*, as God complains of old, *Hos.* 11.12. for it is by *faith* that we draw near to God. *Abraham* drew near to pray; and they that would do so, must be heirs of his *faith*, and walk in the steps of that *faith* that he put forth which is the father of us all. Thou canst as well climb up to the Moon, as go to God and make a prayer to him so as to be accepted, without

without *Christ*, without *faith*: without *Christ* thou wantest *the ladder*, and without *faith* thou wantest *a foot* to come to God by him. No Unbeliever can make a prayer so as to be *accepted*.

*Use 3. for Humiliation*, that our prayers are so *destitute of faith*, or at least we are of *little faith*, as *Christ* speaks. When the Sails of a Ship are full, she goes on swiftly; and if our Prayers were filled with *faith*, how swiftly and sweetly would they bring in *Rich Returns* to us? but a *scant wind* spoils the blessed market that we might make. A *little faith* and a *large prayer* does not bring in that we look for, it hinders our drawing near to God.

*Use 4: for Exhortation.* 1. To be *thankfull* to God that gives us *admittance* into his Presence, and *leave* to draw near to him. We would shew our selves *thankfull* for being admitted into an earthly Kings Presence, and that we might have any near approach to him, to put up any Petitions of concernment to him: Oh how *thankfull* should we then be, that the great God will vouchsafe to give us leave to come before him, to put up as many Petitions as we will to him, especially considering *what we are*, and *what we have been* to him when time was, *Tit. 3. 3.* considering also what *great things* they are that we come to make suit for; *Pardon of sin, Peace of Conscience, Assurance of his love, Heaven and Happiness,*

*Happiness*, which no Kings on earth can give: we can never be thankfull enough to him for this; Heaven and Earth should be full of our praises for this great favour.

2. To love the Lord *Jesus*, by whom we thus draw near to God, Heb. 7.19. Eph. 2.18. We would for ever love that Favourite that brought us into the Kings Presence, and presented our Petitions to him, and got some great thing sealed and confirmed to us: Oh what love then should Christ have from us, that admits us into the Presence of God, and presents our requests, and mediates for us, and sees all done that we desire of him? *Joh.* 14.13,14. We can never love him enough. As the Prophet said of Gods *Infiniteness*, Isa. 40.16. *Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor all the beasts for a burnt-offering*: so we may say, All the fragrant spices and sacrifices of our dearest hearts love are too little, are not sufficient for him that brings us so near the blessed God. And though we cannot come off with so much love as he deserves for this, yet let us do what we can, and give him our hearts, Prov. 23. 26. And as it is with those that love either men or women, they love the very ground they tread upon: so let it be with us, let us love the ground he treads upon, those places that he comes most to. Psal. 26.8. *Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house,* (saith David)



*vid)* and the place where thine honour dwelleth : so should we.

3. To honour Believers that are so honoured of God, as that they may *draw near* to him. They that are frequently in the Presence-Chamber of Kings on earth, as Favourites be, are highly honoured among men : Oh what honour then should we put upon *Believers*, that draw near to the blessed God ? They are indeed the *honourable ones*, and the *excellent of the earth*, which we should set our *delight upon*, Psa. 16. 2, 3. They are *they* that the King of Heaven *delighteth to honour* : and when an earthly King honoureth any, all his Servants will honour such ; so should we honour those that God honours by admitting them to *draw near* to him. We should think honourably of them, speak honourably of them, do honourably by them, put them in our hearts, lay them in our bosoms, give them all the honour that's fit for men, and (under God) let them have the *highest room* in our hearts, who have this honour from God, to *draw so near unto God*.

4. To pray that when we come before him, we may indeed (as *Abraham* did) *draw near* to him. If we bring our Petitions *near him*, and our hearts be *somewhere else*, we do but mock God, and do not draw near to him : if our lips go, and our hearts *gad* ; if our tongues waver, and our hearts wander ; if our *mouthes utter*,  
and

and our *hearts* scatter, we do but lose our selves, and lose the duty, and all the good we might have by it. Pray therefore for such an heart as David had, *Psal. 57. 7. My heart is fixed, O Lord, my heart is fixed*: we have naturally *unfixed* hearts, *unstable* hearts, such hearts as will give us the slip, and give God the slip, but if we would indeed draw near to God, we must desire a *fixed* heart.

5. To long for heaven, where we shall be near him indeed. We have, through his grace, some near approaches to him, especially when he makes us serious and lively in the duty, even in *this* life, but it is but a little; yet whatever it is, it is his mercy that we may come any *whis* near him, as it is in *Psal. 148. 14.* that he shuts us not quite out of his presence: but when we come in glory, we shall be near indeed. Oh! how near are the *blessed Angels*, and *blessed Souls* in glory! they have his ear, they have his heart, they are in his *Presence-Chamber*, in his *bosom*, lye near his very Soul: no nearness like that which they enjoy, and we shall in a state of glory; and *this* we are to long and breathe for.

6. In the mean time to be as near him as we can, and as often with him as we may; the oftner the better: the more walks we have with him, the more of the rays of his beauty will be seen upon us; the more frequent our addresses be to him, the

the more of *heavens glory* will be put upon us : God will be seen in our very *faces*, something of God in our very *countenances* ; all that see us will say, Doubtless these men have met with God, and God hath met with them, they have *drawn near to him* indeed, there is such radiancy of the *divine beauty* upon them. See *Exod. 34. 29, 30.*

*Use 5. for Consolation* : 1. Against our *loss of near Relations*, Brethren, Sisters, Fathers houses, nearest and dearest Friends ; we in *this Country* have *left these* ; but if we can get *nearer God* here, he will be in *stead of all*, more than *all* to us ; he hath the *fulness* of all the *sweetest Relations* bound up in him. We may *take that out of God*, that we *forsook* in Father, Mother, Brother, Sister and Friend, that hath been as near and dear as our own Soul.

2. Against *loss of our own Country*, which is to be esteemed as a mans self, *Luke 4. 23.* and should be very dear to us : but if we be put *far from that*, and *draw near to God*, all is well ; he will bring us to an *heavenly Country*, and to that that's better than what we left.

3. Against *loss of Life here*, which is dear to us, and goes near to our hearts ; but if we get *near God*, and have more frequent recourse to him by Prayer of faith, his presence that we have enjoyed here, is *more than life*. We must have died where-ever we had been ; and if it be our  
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lot to die in a strange Land, we are not a whit the further off from God by it; our Souls are as soon carried to heaven, as if we had died elsewhere.

**H**AVING shewed what *Abraham* did, in drawing near to God in Prayer; we come now to what he said, and handle the words as they lye in the Text, *Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?*

Doct.II. **T**HAT even among the most wicked Sinners, there may be found some Righteous.

This *Abraham* presupposeth, and it was not without ground, for *Lot* there was, whom he knew to be a righteous man, and so the Holy Ghost styles him, 2 *Pet.* 2. 7, 8. There was *Obadiah* in wicked *Ahabs* Court, 1 *Kings* 18. 3, 4. Prime Saints there were in cruel *Nero's* Household, *Phil.* 4. 22. at *Pergamus*, where *Satans* Throne was, there were righteous ones, *Rev.* 2. 13. So in the old World, The world of the ungodly, as it is called, when all flesh had corrupted their wayes, 2 *Pet.* 2. 5. *Gen.* 6. 12. there was a Righteous *Noah*, *Gen.* 6. 9. So *Enoch* in that wicked Age, he lived (*Jude* 14, 15.) a blessed man, that constantly walked with God, as the Hebrew Verb, in the Conjugation *Hithpael*, holds out;  
and

Doct. 2. among the most wicked. 33

and so Junius and Tremelius render it, *indefinitè amixt*. Some good there are among the worst and vilest among men; some Corn among the Chaff; some Wheat among the Tares; some Gold mingled with the Dross; some Sheep with the Goats; some sweet Flowers and Herbs growing with the Weeds; some fruitful Trees among Briars and Brambles, Thorns and Thistles; some Jewels among the Sands; some Pearls among a multitude of Shells; some gracious Saints among the Wicked.

Reasons. 1. From God. 2. From the righteous themselves. 3. From the wicked.

1. From God: 1. He would leave the wicked hereby without Excuse, that have had some good examples before their eyes, some patterns of piety to follow, and yet they would be vile, when they had such eminent gracious ones amongst them: This leaves them wholly without excuse, they can make no apologie for themselves. That Servant that is idle and riotous, when his fellow-servants have been diligent in their work, must needs have his mouth stoppt, his Master will take no excuse: So our Master that is in Heaven will take no excuse from such as having good examples before them, will yet be wicked, when they might be better, *Mat. 25. 24, 25, 26, 27.*

2. He makes these Righteous ones more eminent in holiness by living among such wicked ones.

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Who so famous as *Enoch* and *Noah* were, that lived among the wicked in their times? who so eminent as *Obadiah* in *Ahabs* house, who sold himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord? 1 Kings 21.25. If we look into 1 Kings 18.3. it is said, that *Obadiah* feared the Lord greatly. What rare jewels were found upon such a dunghill as *Nero's Court*, Phil. 4.22. The most excellent of Saints have been found amongst the most wicked sinners: their black makes the godlies white more conspicuous. How eminent was *Lot* in *Sodom*, 2 Pet. 2.7.8. their darkness makes the Saints light shine more brightly: their deformity makes the Saints beauty more to be admired: they often prove the rarest men, that live amongst the worst of men.

3. He permits them to be together till the harvest, and at the end of the world he will say to the Reapers, which are the Angels, Gather up the Tares, and binde them up in bundles to burn, but gather the Wheat into my barn, Mat. 13.30. His permissive and providential Will is in it, that good and bad should be together till the great day of Separation come: There will be a mixture of one with another while we are here; there will be Vines and Figtrees, as well as Thorns and Bramble-bushes; there will be Roses as well as pricking Briars; some Lillies among a multitude of Thorns; some gracious Saints among a many wicked sinners.

4. God hereby exerciseth the graces of his righteous ones, and tries their faith and patience, their humility and self-deniall, by being among the wicked world: for they will be taunting and mocking, and many wayes dealing injuriously with them; they will persecute them, and put them into the furnace, and so their graces are more bright, and orient, and refulgent, and themselves come out as gold; Job 23. 10. By these God makes up his Jewels, and hangs them out, that their glory and lustre may appear to all. Solid mettall never looks more shining, then when it hath been longest in the fire: so here.

5. God hereby makes them more heavenly-minded, and more weaned from the world: they have enough and too much of an evil world, that they are desirous in Gods time to go out of it. What they meet with here, makes them long for heaven. As the sparks fly upward, so these sparky lively ones fly upward and heaven-ward in their looks and longings, and earnest desires after that blessed place. No meer man was more afflicted with evil men, then Paul, and none more heavenly-minded then he, 2 Cor. 4. 17, 18. Phil. 3. 20. these give wings to our desires, to mount them up heaven-ward; these winds lift up our hearts (as the waves of the Sea) unto heaven; these make us like Eagles, to soar aloft: we have so much of their bad company, that we would gladly

gladly be with better, Phil. 1. 23.

6. God hereby makes *Heaven* to be *Heaven* to such godly ones as have been among the wicked: their company hath been a kinde of hell to them, and to leave hell to go to heaven, O how sweet must that heaven be! to come out of a *dungeon of darkness* into *light*, O how pleasant must that light be! *Heavens glory* is compared to the *light*, Psal. 49. 19. Col. 1. 12. and that light must needs be sweet indeed, after such *darkness*.

2. From the *Righteous themselves*: 1. They are a *curb* and *restraint* to them; at least they are not so *vile* while they look on, though some be very *impudent* even in the company of godly ones, as the *Sodomites* were, 2 Pet. 2. 7, 8. but ordinarily they are a *restraint* to them: they are as *bit* and *bridle* to such *head-strong* beasts, that they dare not fly out, and break away into such *vile abominations* as otherwise their corrupt natures would carry them to.

2. They do *condemn* them, Heb. 11. 7. Their *good example* condemns them both in their *Consciences* here, and will *aggravate* their *condemnation* another day, in that living where such godly ones were, they would not learn *Righteousness*, but be as *base* and *lewd*, as if they had none to teach them better.

3. They keep off many *plagues* and *judgements* from them, Gen. 19. 22. Job 22. 30. Their *impre-*

sence,

since, their prayers, their tears and mournful sighs, defer the coming of that Exile, that the sins of those wicked ones call for: They stand in the gap, and make up the hedge to keep out wrath from breaking in upon them. *woud yeh dighodt*

2. They bring in many blessings and mercies to those they live among, which they should never have had, had it not been for the godly that have lived among them: many a fair *lontward* blessing the wicked may thank the godly for, Gen. 12.2. *Slaves* fare the better for the abundance that is provided for Sons; yea, Dogs fill their bellies of that which is the portion of Children.

3. From the Wicked. 1. Even among them there may be some that God may shew favour to, and may effectually call home. That man runs far, that God cannot bring back again; as we see in persecuting Saul, Acts 9. Zachenai, Luke 19. the woman of Samaria, Joh. 4. And righteous men living among these, are a means of their spiritual good.

2. They are some of them instrumental to bring some godly men amongst them, though not out of any love to them for their godliness sake. This may be blessed for the spiritual good of some of them.

3. They are often convinced that they do naughtily, having such to teach them better, both by precept and example: Their Consciences tell them

them they do evil, their hearts upbraid them for their wickedness, that having such lights to shine to them, they yet walk on in darkness.

4. They do even wish they may die their deaths, though they know not how to live their lives, *Numb. 23. 10.* Oh that I might die that mans death, sayes such a man, I would never desire to fare better then he: Oh that I might fare as well, and then it would be well with me. These wishings and wouldings they sometimes have, by righteous mens being among them.

5. They do see some kinde of beauty and lustre in their way, and speak of the Saints happy condition very affectionately, *Numb. 24. 3, 6, &c.* that there's no people in the world like them, and specially that God is among them.

6. They do foretell the Saints victory over their enemies, and that they shall do valiantly against all that rise up against them, *Numb. 24. 8, 9*

7. They learn at least a form of godliness of them, though they cannot come up to the power of it; they learn to speak as they speak, and get their phrases, and can tell how to use their tongues, as if they were better men then indeed they are. This they have by the Saints company which are amongst them.

8. They see the mischief that befalls them, when they that are godly are taken from them, and what fools they were that made no better improve



improvement of them. Thus the Sodomites could not but see when Lot was taken from them, for as soon as he was gone, the Lord rained fire and brimstone, and destroyed them all, Gen. 19. 24, 25.

Use 1. for Information: 1. We see that as long as there are some Righteous ones among the wicked, we may hope that God will not destroy them, that he will not bury his Jewels among such dunghills; that he will not burn up his Wheat with the Chaff; that he will spare the Wicked for the sake of the Righteous that are among them. But I shall have occasion to speak more fully to that upon the following words. God will do much for evil men, out of respect to his gracious Saints; their very presence holds Gods hands, their prayers hold his heart towards them: their tears and sighs are prevailing arguments to keep off blows, to continue blessings. But enough at present of this.

2. We see what the Saints condition is in this world, it is to be mingled with the wicked: Lambs among Lions; Sheep among Wolves; Flowers among filthy weeds; the best of men among the worst. We may not look to be all Jewels, there will be shells with us that are good for nothing; we cannot expect to be all Gold, the dross will mix it self with it: they that would see a pure company as to consist of all Saints, must go to Heaven for it. Our Churches carry a fair face of

*Purity*, and they are called *Golden Candlesticks*, the denomination being given from the *better part*, Rev. 2. 1. but God knows we are more *dross* than *gold*, and little do we know what *rat-senness* lies at many hearts: if our *insides* were turned *outward*, Oh what abominations would appear! Many a *comely face* we may see, and many a *goodly semblance*, but what *Truth* there is in many, God and their *Consciences* know, and will discover in due time.

3. We see what *longing desires* we should have for *Heaven*, where there will be all *Righteousness*: for here good and bad are mingled together: a few *Pearls* among a multitude of *pebbles*, here and there a *Diamond* among a number of *baser stones*; one *rare one*, among a thousand of the *common sort*: but in *Heaven* they are all *choice jewels*, all *Righteous*, all *holy*, all *precious* as the gold of *Ophir*; there is no *mixture* there, none enter there that are *defiled*; there are no *weeds* in that *garden*, no *chaff* in that *barn*, no *Serpent* gets into that *Paradise*, no *unholy ones* ever come in *Heaven*. [*But of this hereafter.*]

4. We see that God will have *wicked men* *curbed* and *restrained*, that they shall not be so *wicked* as they would be, for they shall have *some Righteous ones* among them; He will put a *bridle* upon them to keep them in: the *Righteous* shall *reprove* them, and tell them of their *ins*,

sins, and seek to shame them out of them: so that they cannot be so bad as they would, for *these are darts and arrows* that they shoot at them, and strong *curbs*, that they cannot be so headstrong in a way of wickedness as else they would.

5. We see what a *wonder* of his Power and Grace it is, that the righteous are *preserved* amidst the multitudes of wicked ones, that the *little Flock* should be kept among such a company of *Wolves and Lions*; that the *Lambs* are not devoured and eaten up, and made a prey of by such *beasts of prey*; that they should be in their company, and *safely kept*, this is one of the great *wonders* that God does, and to think seriously of it, will cause us to wonder at it.

6. We see how *justly* God will one day judge *wicked sinners*, for they have had *some Righteous ones* among them, whereby they might have been better; and therefore they continuing in their wickedness, notwithstanding the help that God affords to them to better their condition, their *Condemnation* must needs be *very just*.

*Use 2. for Terror* to those that have lived among the *Righteous*, and got no good by them, this will be the greatest cut to them when they come to die that is. I remember in *Cambridge* a Thief there suffered death, and this troubled his Conscience most, *That he lived in a Family*

once

once where he might have been better, but was not.

Use 3. for Humiliation, That our sins have exposed us to live among such wicked sinners, Atheists, Papists, Quakers, Profane persons, Sodomites, Drunkards, Whoremongers, Scoffers, Railers, unquiet devils, &c.

Use 4. for Exhortation: 1. To bless God for our preservation among such.

2. To do what good we can among them.

3. To do as Lot did in Sodom, 2 Pet. 2. 7, 8.

4. To breathe after other fellowship.

Doct. III. **T**hat God will destroy the wicked, but will not destroy the righteous with the wicked in the day of their destruction.

This Abraham plainly holds out in the words of the Text, *Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?* where he makes account that the wicked shall be destroyed; but that God will destroy the righteous with the wicked, that he does seem to deny: *Wilt thou do it?* No surely, thou wilt not do it, it were very strange if thou shouldst: So that this Interrogation hath the force of a Negation in it. We will handle the first Branch first, That God will destroy the wicked; and then handle the latter Branch afterward.

For opening of the first Branch, let me shew  
 1. *When* he will destroy them. 2. *How* he will  
 destroy them. 3. *Why* he will destroy them.  
 4. The *Uses*.

Quest. 1. *When* will he destroy them?

1. First, when their sins for *quality* are *Sodom's*  
*sins*. 1. When their sins cry for vengeance and  
 destruction; Gen. 18. 20. Crying sins bring de-  
 struction with them; especially when the cry is  
 great, that's alwayes a forerunner of destru-  
 ction; it is *posting* and *hasting*, and will make no  
 stop nor stay then, it comes *flying*, when sins  
 are crying; it comes galloping with all speed,  
 then there is no delay, but it is near at hand, and  
 they shall know it.

2. When their sins are *grievous*, Gen. 18. 20.  
 of an *heinous* nature, of a deep dye, as well as of a  
 loud cry: When sins are as *scarlet* and *crimson*,  
 as the Prophet speaks Isa. 1. 18. *staining* and *dy-*  
*ing* others; then destruction comes. Such were  
*Sodom's sins* that did destroy them. Heinous  
 Malefactors do not escape mens severest punish-  
 ment; how much less shall they escape destru-  
 ction from the Lord that are *heinous sinners*?

3. When their sins are come to the full: so  
 were the sins of *Sodom*, they were at the height  
 and full, they were *brim-full*, they had filled up  
 their measure. God stayes his hand till this, and  
 then he can stay no longer, Gen. 15. 16. Dan. 8. 23.



*Joel 3.13. Rev. 14. 18, 19. The sharp sickle is thrust in, when the grapes are fully ripe; when the press is full, and the fats overflow, then is a time for the destroyers to come. The Moon is never darkened and eclipsed, but in the full; so the darkness of destruction does not come, but when sin is first come to the full.*

4. When their sins are *universal*: so were the sins of Sodom, Gen. 19. 4. So Gen. 6. 12. when all flesh had corrupted his way, then it was a time for the Flood to come. General sins bring general destruction with them. If the Plague be in all places, and be universal, it brings great destruction with it. Sin is the plague of the heart, and if it spread it brings a sore destruction with it.

5. When their sins are *shameless* and *impudent*: so were they of Sodom, Gen. 19. 5. Isa. 3. 9. Jer. 6. 15. & 8. 12. Shameless sins are running sins; when men are past shame, they are past hope; when they cannot blush, they cannot escape; when they have a whore's forehead, they have the hire of a whore, and that is destruction.

6. When they are *stiff-necked*, Prov. 29. 1. when no Counsels, no Reproofs, no Admonitions will work good upon such, their destruction comes in again upon them, and speeds its way to them. What destruction did God bring upon hard-hearted Pharaoh? he went on in a way of obstinacy and hardened his heart against all Gods

*Words and Rods*, and it was his ruine. *Obstinacy* is alwayes a forerunner of *destruction*: A callous brawny heart speeds a man to perdition; it lets in, like an hole in a Bank, a sea of Misery, and drowns all before it.

Thus much for the *quality of the sins that bring destruction*; let me now shew the *kind of them*.

*Secondly*, When sins for the kinde of them are like *Sodoms sins*. And what were they?

*Ans. 1. Pride*, Ezek. 16.49. in *Apparel*, in *looks*, in *gate*, in *carriage* and *behaviour*, in *gesture*, in *building*, and any other way exprest: this is a sin that brings destruction with it. *Prov. 16.18. & 18.12. Before destruction the heart of man is haughty*: the highest Towers come soonest down, the highest Mountains are soonest shaken; and so it is with the highest Spirits, *Isa. 2.12—17. & 3.16—24.*

2. *Excess in eating and drinking*, Ezek. 16.49. exprest in the phrase of *Fulness of bread*. Our Saviour expresth this sin of theirs, *Luk. 17.28. They did eat, they drank*; that is, *to excess*: they were taken up with these things, delighting in satisfying their sensual appetites, and pleasing their palates, and filling their bellies; this was their trade that they were busied about, and this *fulness of theirs fitted them for destruction*, and *fatted them for the slaughter*. A belly full of meat, and an head full of drink, as it fills the heart full

full of sorrow, so it brings destruction with it, Phil. 3. 19. *Their end is destruction, whose god is their belly.*

3. *Fornication*: Jude ver. 7. *They gave themselves over to fornication, which comprehends in it Adultery also, Filthiness in both kindes; and this was a fruit of their fulness of bread. They that are full of meat and drink, will be full of lust. A full barrel will have a vent, and a full belly will have a vent to filthy concupiscence and uncleanness. A full Chest is soonest rifled, and a full House soonest robbed and spoiled: so when men are full of Creature-comforts, they are soonest made a prey of by vile lusts, that drown them in perdition and destruction.*

4. *Unnatural Uncleanness*: *Strange flesh*, as it is called, Jude ver. 7. *when men with men commit filthiness, and women with women, as the Apostle expresth it, Rom. 1. 26, 27. and this makes men ripe for ruine. Strange lusts bring strange punishment; strange fire kindled upon earth, brings strange fire from heaven. Fire naturally ascends, but the fire that destroyed the Sodomites descended, Gen. 19. 24. the sin was strange, and the destruction strange: God proportions the punishment to the sin, payes men in their own coin, they have fire for fire, and not onely so, but strange fire, for strange fiery lusts.*

5. *Abundance of Idleness*, Ezek. 16. 49. *that addes*

addes fewel to the fire of lust. *Idleness* is ever the incendiary of *filthiness*, and where there is abundance of it, there must needs be a great fire of it kindled, which will burn to destruction: it is as coals to burning coals, and as wood to the fire, that kindle the wilde-fire of lust that burns to hell fire: it is like oil to the flame of uncleanness, which feeds it till it bring men to destruction. *Quaritur Egistus quare sit luxuriosus, in promptu causa est, desidiosus erat*; that man that is idle, will be *luxurious*: it breeds and feeds the fire of all filthy lusts, which are a fire that burneth to destruction.

6. Neglect of the poor and needy, Ezek. 16.49. this is a destroying sin, for which God took the *Sodomites* away as he saw good. They that made so much of themselves, and did so indulge their own sensual desires, they minded not at all the poor amongst them, but were hard-hearted and cruel to them: and this is a sin that brings ruine with it.

7. Conversing in, and about worldly matters: Luke 17.28. They bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; these were the things they were wholly imployed in, and taken up with: They minded earthly things, and nothing else, and their end is destruction that minde earthly things, Phil. 3. 19. These were the great things in their eye and heart, and that brought ruine upon them, and will

will destroy all those that set their mindes and hearts upon them. *Earth* is the heaviest of the Elements, and earthly-mindedness that that brings heavy destruction with it.

Quest. 2. *How will God destroy the wicked?*

Ans. 1. *Speedily*, Psal. 37. 2. *They shall soon be cut down as the grass; They shall not live out half their dayes* some of them, Psal. 55. 23. God will make speedy dispatch with them. Some die in youth, whose life hath been among the unclean, Job 36. 13, 14. There's a flying Roll, the Curse, that comes speedily, and is upon the wing, and hastes the destruction of wicked men, Zech. 5. 1, 2. As birds fly swiftly, so they bring swift destruction upon themselves, 2 Pet. 2. 1.

2. *Suddenly, and unexpectedly*: 1 Thess. 5. 2. *When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction comes.* See Prov. 29. 1. & 24. 21, 22. How suddenly was the Host of the *Assyrians* cut off? 2 Kin. 19. 35. How suddenly was *Sennacherib* himself destroyed? 2 Kin. 19. 37. How suddenly was *Haman* destroyed? when he least expected it, his destruction came upon him: on a sudden a storm ariseth, on a sudden a Thunder-shower falls: so here. Bad News is brought suddenly; when men think not of it; so is destruction to the workers of iniquity.

3. *Dreadfully*: How dreadfully were the *Sodomites* destroyed: Gen. 19. 24, 25. *For ever*.

and



and they now suffer the vengeance of eternal fire. How dreadfully was the old World, The world of the ungodly, destroyed by the universal Deluge? Gen. 7. 22, 23. Sometimes there falls such a dreadful Rain, as if Heaven and Earth would come together: sometimes there breaks out such fearful flashes of Lightning, and such dreadful Thunder-claps are heard, as are amazing to us. So is the destruction of the wicked, the storm falls dreadfully, as well as suddenly upon them.

4. Ignominiously: So Haman was ignominiously destroyed, and his ten Sons, they were all hanged, Esth. 7. 10. Or 9. 14. So Achitophel, 2 Sam. 17. 23. he hanged himself: so Judas hanged himself, burst in sunder, and all his bowels gushed out, Mat. 27. 5. Acts 1. 18. So Herod was eaten up of worms, Acts 12. 23. Thus Arius, that wicked Heretick, that obstinately denied the Deity of the Son of God, and far more, himself died an ignominious death, voiding out his bowels with his excrements. See also 2 Chron. 21. 18, 19.

5. Everlastingly, 2 Thess. 1. 9. Who shall be destroyed with everlasting destruction, and that's a pitiful destruction: if it were but a temporal destruction it were the less matter, but to be destroyed for ever, who is able to bear that? Jude ver. 7. that's the worst thing that can befall them that must undergo that destruction. See Obad.

ver. 10. To have the life taken away is afflictive, for a man will give *all he hath* for that, *Job 2. 4.* but what is this to *everlasting destruction*?

6. *Remedilessly*, there's no remedy but God must destroy wicked men, he knows not how to spare them any longer, *2 Chron. 36. 16.* *Prov. 6. 15. & 24. 1.* When the Disease is so desperate that there's no healing for it, the case is sad: such is their case that are destroyed *without remedy*, that no Balm can cure, that no Medicine can do any good upon.

7. *Strangely*: so were the Sodomites destroyed, fire descended, contrary to the nature of it; they had sinned contrary to nature by their fiery lusts, and gone after *strange flesh*, and were in a *strange manner* destroyed. So Nadab and Abihu offered *strange fire* before the Lord, and were destroyed in a *strange manner*, *Lev. 10. 1, 2.* So Obad. ver. 5. the Prophet cannot tell how to express *Edoms destruction* it was so strange, he stands as it were amazed at it, *How art thou cut off?* See *Job 31. 3.*

8. *Lamentably*, so as others shall bewail their destruction. Thus the Prophets did *Lamentably* bewail *Moabs destruction*, *Isa. 16. 9.* *Jer. 48. 31, 32.* So Christ bewailed the destruction of *Jerusalem*, *Luk. 19. 41--44.* Thus Rome shall be destroyed *lamentably*, so as all her Merchants and Traders with her shall bewail her bitterly, *Rev.*

Doct. 3. in the wickeds destruction.

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18. weeping, and wailing, and crying out for her lamentable destruction.

Quest. 3. Why will God thus destroy the wicked?

Ans. 1. From himself. 2. From them.

First, From himself. 1. He is a just Lord, Zeph. 3.3. and from that Justice does execute judgement upon them, and destroy them. Just Judges on earth will not suffer notorious persons to live, how much more the just Lord?

2. He is a God of purer eyes then to behold evil; viz. without loathing and detestation: and cannot look upon iniquity; viz. with any approbation: and this purity of his Nature puts him upon destroying wicked ones.

3. He sees all their wickedness, more open, or more secret, Jer. 7.11. & 23.24. Job 34.21,22. There is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves, and therefore destruction shall be their portion.

4. He is a God to whom vengeance belongeth, Deut. 32.35. Psal. 94.1. and the Lord God of Re-compences will surely requite, Jer. 51.56.

Secondly, From the wicked. 1. They are devoted to destruction. Jer. 12.3. Pluck them out as sheep for the slaughter, prepare them for the day of slaughter.

2. Their sins are very great, and very provoking, as the Sodomites sins were, and such as God will not pardon.

3. They are of so long continuance, that he is weary of repenting, Jer. 18. 6.

4. They do some of them sin against the Holy Ghost, as some of the Pharisees did, Mat. 12. 31, 32. and that sin cannot be repented of, Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6. and for such there remains no more sacrifice, but a fearful looking for of judgement, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries, Heb. 10. 27.

Use 1. for Information. 1. We see the woful estate of wicked men living and dying such, God will destroy them. They may brave it for a season, and flourish, and seem to carry all before them, and think to do great things against the Lord and his Saints, but woe to them, the reward of their hands shall be given them, and this reward shall be destruction, Isa. 3. 11. The Sodomites carried it highly against the Lord, and braved it against just Lot, Gen. 19. but within a little time showers of fire and brimstone rained from heaven and destroyed them all. Haman braved it against the Jews, and thought to have destroyed them all, but he procured his own destruction by it. An high house falls sometimes with the weight of it, so does an high and proud heart.

2. We see that we have no cause to fret, or be envious at them, for they shall soon be destroyed, Psal. 37. 1, 2. Godly men are apt to it, I was envious at the foolish, sayes Asaph, Psal.

73.3. So *Ier.* 12.1,2. but there's no cause if we consider their end, *Psa.* 73.17,18. Destruction is their deserved punishment. See *Psa.* 37.35,36. the highest Towers have the deepest falls; so they that are in *highest dignity*, Princes Favourites are not *envied*, because when they come down, their fall is great: so it was with *Haman*, and with other Favourites, *Sardanus*, that *Tiberius Caesar* made such account of; but when he came down, his ruine was great. And this *sad Catastrophe* have all wicked men, though they may spread their Plumes for a little time; and therefore there is no cause to *fret* because of the wicked, nor to be *envious* at the workers of iniquity: a *sad blow* at last kills them.

3. We see what reason there is why we should not *chuse any of their ways*, *Prov.* 3.31. lest we have a minde to be destroyed with them. They that go together in a way of sin, ever go together to destruction, except mercy step in to save some of them, *Prov.* 13.20. A bundle of Drunkards, a bundle of filthy persons, as the Sodomites were, a bundle of Blasphemers, and so of the rest, they shall be all bound up in bundles to be burned together. They that chuse the same way, go to the same *sad journey's end*.

4. We see what a dreadful God we have to do with, and what cause we have to *fear before him*, that will thus destroy the wicked. How should



we fear before him? Children fear when Slaves are beaten: so should we.

5. We see the great mercy of God to any of us, that when we went on in a way of wickedness, and deserved to be destroyed, that yet he would spare us, *Psal. 103. 10.* As no sinners were like us, so no God is like him, *Mic. 7. 18.* How easily and justly might he have destroyed us, and rendered to us according to our deserts? his mercy hath been great, that he hath not dealt with us as we have dealt with him, and as we have deserved from him.

6. We see that we need not be troubled when such men bring their wicked devices to pass, and prosper in their way of evil; for after all they must be destroyed; when they have run their run, they will come to ruine; *Psal. 37. 7, 8, 9.*

7. We see how much better it is to cut off right hands, and right feet, and to pluck out right eyes, sins as dear as these members, rather than to be thus miserably destroyed, *Mark 9. 43--46.*

Use 2. for Terror to all wicked ones; how will they bear destruction when it cometh? for if they continue, and live and dye such, there's nothing else to be expected but destruction; and were it onely to be destroyed out of the land of the living here, it were something, if it were a fruit of Gods displeasure: but Oh the misery of those that are and shall be everlastingly destroyed!

no tongue can expresse; nor heart can conceive what calamity there is in such destruction: the wicked Sodomites now feel it, *Jude ver. 7.*

*Use 3. for Humiliation,* that we pity them no more: for how can we endure to see them so destroyed? we would pity a Malefactor hanging upon the Gallows: Oh how then should we pity these that die the second death.

*Use 4. for Exhortation.* 1. To beware of walking in the wayes of such men, lest our end be like theirs.

2. Of company with them, lest they carry us to destruction along with them.

3. To pity dear *England*, and pray for them, that God would give them repentance, for that will prevent this destruction.

4. To desire that this may never be our doom, and that our eyes may never see it.

5. To do all we can to prevent it. 1. Get a part in Christ, *1 Thess. I. 10.* 2. Forsake sin, *Ezek. 18. 30.*

We come to speak of the *second Branch* of the third Doctrine, and that is this, *That he will not destroy the righteous with the wicked in the day of their destruction.* For I said, That this Interrogation hath the force of a Negation in it.

*Reasons.* 1. From God, 2. From the righteous themselves.

First, *From God.* 1. Though he may correct, and sorely afflict his righteous ones, yet he hath alwayes made a difference between the righteous and the wicked. Noah and his family were saved in the universal Deluge, 2 Pet. 2. 5. Lot in Sodom was delivered, when they were all burned with fire and brimstone, 2 Pet. 2. 7. God knows not how to deal alike with the one and with the other, but all shall see that the Lord puts a difference, as he did of old between the Egyptians and the Israelites, so now between his righteous Servants, and wicked ones, Mal. 3. 17, 18.

2. He hath commanded them to go out from the midst of them that are to be destroyed, Jer. 51. 45. Rev. 18. 4. Thus he did to Lot in Sodom, Gen. 19. 17, 22.

3. He hath promised to put a difference between the righteous and the wicked, in the day when he brings destruction upon them. Jer. 46. 28. Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee, but I will not make a full end of thee, &c. and he will make his promise good. Men may promise, and break their word, but he will not, he is faithful that hath promised, not any thing of it shall fail, Job. 23. 14. 1 King. 8. 56.

4. He hath charged the Executioners of his wrath to slay utterly old and young of those that

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he will have destroyed, but not to come near any of his righteous that he would have spared, Ezek. 9.6. and he will see to it that they keep their charge; they shall not touch any of them, not an hair of their heads shall perish.

5. He loves the righteous, Psal. 146.8. and therefore will not deal with them as with the wicked. There's no man in his right minde will destroy those he loves; how can we think then that the Lord will destroy the Righteous whom he loves, with the Wicked that are an abomination to him? he will surely put a difference between them.

6. He hath said, that others shall discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not, Mal. 3. 18. and this could not be, if God should destroy the righteous with the wicked. If we may discern this, then surely God makes a broad difference betwixt the one and the other.

Secondly, From the Righteous ones themselves.

1. They are vexed for the unlawful deeds of the wicked. The word translated vexed, is tormented in the Greek, and is a Verb that comes of a Noun that signifies the torment of hell, as is in Luke 16. 28. The Sodomites filthy conversation was like the torment of hell to just Lot, 2 Pet. 2. 7, 8. and God delivered him out of their bellicious punishment.

2. They

2. They cry and sigh for the abomination of the wicked they live among, Ezek. 9. 4, 5, 6. and God will not have them destroyed, but marked out to be spared in the day of the destruction of the wicked. Mourners are Gods marked ones, and what destruction befalls others, they shall be sure to escape. The Slaughter-weapon shall not come near such mens doors that fight for sinners. 3. They are a people near to God; Psa. 148. 14. and will he destroy them with the wicked? he will never do it. Could any of us have the heart to destroy any that are near to us? How can I endure (sayes Esther) to see the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred? Esth. 8. 6. and can God then (think we) endure to see the destruction of those that are so near to him? Surely he cannot do it. 4. They do abominate and detest the wayes of wicked men. An unjust man is an abomination to the just, Prov. 29. 27. and how can we then think that God will destroy his righteous with the wicked, whose wickedness is such an abomination to them? It should not come into our mindes that he will do such a thing as this. 5. They are his jewels, Mal. 3. 17. and will men throw away their Jewels among the Rubbish? will they cast away their precious Pearls and Rubies among the mire and dirt. & will they



mix *Diamonds* and *Dung* together? Can we then once imagine that God should cast away his *precious ones*, with such as are as *dross* and *dung*? who can think so of the wise God? He may take away the house of *Jeroboam* as *dung*, but *Abijah* his Son, that had some good things found in him towards the Lord God of Israel, was not so dealt with, he was a *jewel*, and therefore not buried in the dung, 1 Kings 14. 10, 13.

6. They are his pleasant Plant, Isa. 5. 7. a noble Vine, Jer. 2. 21. fruitful Trees of Righteousness, Isa. 61. 3. and therefore will have them spared, they shall not be cut down as barren and unfruitful ones be. God gave it in charge to Israel in time of war, not to cut down any fruitful Trees, but those that were unfruitful, they were to destroy, and to cut down, Deut. 20. 19, 20. and if he be so tender of fruitful Trees in a Field or Orchard, that he would not have them destroyed; then sure he will not cut down his own choice Plants, that bring forth pleasant fruits to him.

Obj. But is it not said, Ezek. 21. 3, 4. that God will cut off the righteous and the wicked; it seems therefore that the one fares no better then the other, but both are alike in punishment.

Ans. 1. They are both wrapped up in temporal punishments sometimes, as Ezek. 20. 47. the green tree as well as the dry: But the righteous are always delivered from eternal punishments, which

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the wicked are destroyed with, as the *Sodomites* were, *Jude ver. 7.*

2. They oftentimes are delivered from temporal evils, which the wicked are destroyed with, as *Noah* and *Lot* were.

3. If they do suffer the like temporal punishment, it is in mercy to them, *Isa. 57. 1.* and prevents some greater evil.

4. There are some righteous *only in their own eyes*, and in the repute of others, and they may well be yoked with the wicked both in temporal and eternal punishments: so that the truth is where it was, That God will not destroy the righteous with the wicked, nor shall the one be alike punished as the other.

*Use 1. for Information.* 1. We see how good the Lord is to his righteous ones, that doth so marvellously put a difference between them and others: they have done enough against him, which hath deserved destruction, and for which he might justly do it, but he spares them, as a man does his son that serves him, *Mal. 3. 17.* He pities them, as a father does his children, *Plal. 103. 13.* He will not smite them as he smites others, *Isa. 27. 7, 8.* they shall be preserved, when others are destroyed: God will deal better with the one than with the other, and they and the other shall see it.

2. We see what cause of thankfulness righteous

ous ones have, that they are better *cared for* then others be, for 1 Cor. 4. 7. it is God that hath made the difference betwixt them and others, and he must have the glory of it, *Psal. 115. 1.* His *grace is magnified* by it, that we and others have any difference made betwixt us. Let us shout forth *Grace, Grace,* for this.

3. We see the truth of that in *Prov. 11. 4.* *Righteousness delivereth from death,* from eternal destruction, and that is the worst destruction that is. The *second death* is the forest death, and that every righteous one is *saved from.* The Serpent may *hiss,* but it cannot *bite,* the *sting* is gone, and therefore the danger is over. *Hos. 13. 14.* *O death, I will be thy plagues,* sayes God; and these *plagues* are *killing plagues* to Death, it will never live more, and therefore cannot hurt the righteous.

4. We see that the righteous is indeed more *excellent then his neighbour,* *Prov. 12. 26.* for God puts a great difference between them and others, he will not destroy them with the wicked: they are his *brands* that he will *pluck out of the fire;* his *precious ones,* that he will not cast away with the *dung;* his *gold,* that he will not throw out with the *drofs;* his *rare ones,* that he will hang out for glory and beauty, and save from ruine and perdition.

5. We see that all our *love is too little* for him  
that

that saves us out of the fire, when others are burnt up in it, that frees us from that destruction that wicked men fall headlong into. Heart and Soul, and all that is with us, is too little for him; the fullest stream, and strongest current of our affections, the united forces of our dearest bowels, are not enough for him. Our love in the *fulness* of it, cannot come up in any degree to his; it's not a *drop* to his *Sea*, a *beam* to his *Sun*, a *stream* to his *Fountain*, a *bucket* to his *Well*, a *spark* to his *Fire*: He is *all love* to us, 1 *Joh.* 4. 8, 16. but Oh how little is ours that we express to him!

6. We see what we may expect, if *calamitous times* should come, that it will be well with the righteous, *Isa.* 3. 10. there will be a difference made between them and the wicked; yea, though they should both be killed, yet a great difference shall be made, they shall not be destroyed with that great destruction that the wicked are destroyed with; they may be *singed*, but not *burnt*, they may be *blackened* by their *smoke*, but not *consumed* in their *fire*.

Use 2. for *Terrour* to wicked men; God will put a difference between his righteous ones and them; *Briars* and *Thorns* shall be burnt up, when *fruitful ones* shall be preserved; *dirt* and *dung* shall be cast out, when *jewels* shall be hung out for glory and beauty; *Roses* and *Lillies* shall stand

stand in the garden, when Brambles shall be cut down and wither.

Use 3. for Humiliation to Righteous ones, that are afraid of being destroyed with the wicked: What need they fear, when God makes such a difference betwixt them and others? Men make a difference between gold and drass: much more God.

Use 4. for Exhortation: 1. To exalt Grace, that puts this difference betwixt Righteous ones and others: let discriminating Grace be lifted up, and admired, for that is it that makes the difference, that destruction is the portion of others, and not of us; let this crown Grace, and let us say, *The Kings favour hath done this*. That Pharaohs Butler was restored, and the Baker hanged, when both had offended their Lord, it was his grace to the one, rather then the other, Gen. 40. 21, 22. So here.

2. To be humble: for, as Mephibosheth said of himself, we are no better then dead dogs, and fit fewel for the fire of destruction, 2 Sam. 9. 8.

3. To give up our selves to him, and to be willing to be bored, to be his servants for ever, Ps. 116. 16.

Use 5. for Consol. 1. In the wickeds destruction, the righteous shall not share in their misery, they shall be plucked out, as Lot out of Sodom.

2. Against their fears; God knows how to deliver them, when the fire is destroying the wicked.

noisbust

Ver.



This shot repeats the previous one, but with different lighting.

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Doct. 3. *in the wickeds destruction.* 63

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*nois*

*Ver.*

Verse 24, 25, 26. Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the City, wilt thou also destroy, and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? &c.

Doct. IV. **T**hat godly men that plead with the Lord in behalf of wicked men, are apt to hope the best, that there may be a considerable number of righteous ones amongst them.

Thus Abraham hopes the best of wicked Sodom, that there may be fifty righteous within the City.

Reasons. 1. From the nature of Charity. 2. From the Lords Providence. 3. From the ground of their Hope. 4. From Gods Honour.

First, From the nature of their Charity: It is that, that 1. Hopeth all things, 1 Cor. 13. 7. that is, All things that may be hoped, that there is any probability and likelihood of. It does not hope for impossibilities, but for things that are possible, and any whit probable, those things it hopes for.

2. It Believeth all things, 1 Cor. 13. 7. that is, All things that are to be believed. Charity is not blinde and foolish, to believe every thing, but it believeth what may be believed, and so from that belief hopes the best, even of the worst place that is.

3. It Thinketh all the good it can, but thinketh no evil, 1 Cor. 13. 5. if there be any good construction

Doct. 4. *for the wicked, hope the best.* 65

struction to be put upon a thing that carries an ill face with it, that it will be sure to make: *Sodom* was a sinful place, but yet sayes *Abraham*, It may be there may be so many good amongst them: as if he should say, *I cannot think them all wicked.*

Secondly, *From the Lords Providence*, 1. In permitting good and bad to be together, *Matth. 13.30.* Tares are permitted to be among the wheat untill the end of the world, which is meant by the Harvest, as Christ expounds it, *ver. 39.*

2. In making his word as a Draw-net, which takes up good and bad, *Mat. 12. 47.* so that some good will be among the wicked.

3. In casting some of his choicest ones in the worst places that are, to leave them without excuse, and to condemn them both here, and in the Day of Judgement, as I said before.

Thirdly, *From the nature of their Hope*: 1. It is of things that are not seen, *Rom. 8. 24.* so *Abraham* here hoped for that he saw not.

2. It is conjectural, he puts a may be, or peradventure upon it, and that yields ground for hope, it is not impossible but such a thing may be.

3. It knoweth nothing to the contrary, and that is some ground of hope: as *Abraham* here knew nothing to the contrary, but there might be so many righteous ones in the City.

Fourthly, *From Gods Honour and Glory*:

1. From the glory of his power, for this hope gives

gives him the glory of that Attribute, that he is able to preserve some of his Sheep among so many Wolves, and other beasts of prey.

2. From the glory of his Grace: for this hope gives him the glory of that Attribute, in keeping them *undefiled* among so many polluted ones.

3. From the glory of his secret working, in reserving some to himself which cleave to him in the worst places; for this hope gives him the glory of this secret working, 1 Kings 19. 18.

4. From the glory of his patience; for this hope gives him the glory of that Attribute, that he forbears smiting where there are so many bad, for the sake of a very few good among them.

*Use 1. for Information:* 1. We see how charitable godly men be, even of and toward the wickedest places that are. Sodom was one of the vilest places for wickedness, yet Abraham is not without hope but that there may be fifty righteous persons there; and that under that heap of chaff, might lye hid so many corns of Wheat; and upon that dunghill of filthiness, so many Pearls and precious Gems might be found. Charity is an hoping Grace, and loves to go as far this way as may be. Could any good come out of Sodom? Abraham does not altogether despair of it; Peradventure (sayes he) *there be fifty righteous within the City.*

2. We see what hope we may have concerning England, though there be so many thousands that we could wish were better, yet we cannot but hope



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hope that there are many *fifty hundreds* of righteous persons, yea more then does appear in the Christian world any where else, *Travellers* have taken their observation right; not that they have any cause to *boast themselves*, but to *exalt Grace*: for who hath made *England* to differ from other Nations, that more *Jewels* are found there then elsewhere? and what hath that Island that it hath not received? The *East* and *West-Indies* yield the *Gold*, and *Pearl*, and *Sweet Spices*; but I know where the *golden, precious, spicy, fragrant Christians* be, *England* hath yielded these; yet not *England*, but the *Grace of God* that hath been ever with them.

3. We see what *hope* we may have concerning *New-England*, though we do not deserve to be named the same day with our dear Mother, but have cause to hang down our heads, and blush more then any people in the world, in regard of what God hath done for us, and we have done against him; our sins here being of the first *Magnitude*; and far greater then others, in regard of *Means and Mercies, Liberties and Privileges* that we have enjoyed, but no way so improved as the Lord hath expected: yet this let me say, That we have *many sisters* here (to the glory of God be it spoken) and (the Lord increase them a thousand times more, how many soever they be) that are the *Lords Righteous*

ones: and though there be many *blacker* than a coal, *viler* than the dirt under their feet, and which may wish that they had never seen *New-England* with their eyes, nor heard what they have heard here with their ears, for whom Hell waits and gapes for every day; yet we have some *rare* jewels, and have had some *rarer*, and peradventure there may be more than we think of, as there were in *Elijahs* time.

Use 2. for *Terror* to those places where there are none that are good among them; what will become of such places and persons? Hell opens her mouth wide for them.

Use 3. for *Exhortation*: 1. To pray for the worst places, peradventure some good may be found there; some pearls may be hid in base shells; some gold may be mixed with much dross.

2. To hope well of those places (how bad so ever) where the Gospel comes; that Net will catch some good fish; that Word will be a savour of life unto life to some; that Treasure will enrich some; that will be the power of God to salvation to some; that Glass will transform some into the glorious Image of Christ Jesus, 2 Cor. 3. 18.

3. To bless God for any hope we have of the Righteous that are among us: Oh that there were many more! but for those we have, we are for ever to bless God.

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4. To plead with God, as Abraham did, when God threatens destruction to any place that is dear to us; Peradventure so many Righteous may be found there, and see what such a plea will procure for it. [But of that more hereafter, if the Lord will.]

5. To despair of no place or persons that have not sinned against the Holy Ghost, seeing Abraham stands up for wicked Sodom.

6. To prize those that are choice Believers; they speak good words to the Lord for the wicked, how much more for the Righteous that sue to them.

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Verse 24. — wilt thou also destroy, and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?

Doct. V. **T**Hat godly men do earnestly desire, that God would not destroy, but spare a wicked place, especially for such a considerable number of Righteous ones as may be found therein.

So does Abraham here desire that God would not destroy, but spare Sodom, if fifty righteous persons were found in it.

Reasons. 1. From God. 2. From the righteous ones themselves. 3. From them that pray for them.

First; *From God*: 1. He is very ready to forgive, *Psal. 86. 5. Neh. 9. 17.* at least so as to remit the punishment. *Abraham* knew this full well, and therefore made bold to intercede for wicked *Sodom*. Some men are of that disposition, that they are easie to be intreated, and ready to forgive, much more God.

2. He will do much for those with whom his people have been Sojourners, and that puts them upon prayer for them. *Abraham* knew, that though *Sodom* was a vile place, yet it had suffered *Lot* and his family to dwell there, and therefore prays the rather for them that they may be spared, at least if there were such a considerable number of such as he was.

3. He commands us to be kinde to those that we have dwelt among: *Dent. 23. 7. Thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian, because thou wast a stranger in his land:* and if so, he will be much more kinde himself, and that's a ground of godly mens praying for them.

4. He loves the Righteous, *Psal. 146. 8.* and will do very much for their sakes, even for a sinning people; and that's a ground sufficient for godly ones to pray for them.

5. He is kinde to the unthankful, and to the evil, *Luke 6. 35.* much more if there be Righteous ones amongst them; and therefore have ground to pray for them.

6. He

6. He is willing to hear the prayers put up to him in faith, *Psal. 65. 2. Mat. 21. 22.* as he was to hear *Abraham* in behalf of *Sodom*. [*But of that more hereafter, if the Lord will.*]

Secondly, *From the Righteous ones themselves.*

1. Their presence is delightful to him, and may prevail much for those they live among, *Gen. 19. 22.*

2. Their prayers are not lost that are put up for them; they are accepted, though they prevail not for such a sinning people.

3. Their grief for the sins of such is taken notice of; as *Lots* was for filthy *Sodom*, *2 Pet. 2. 7, 8.*

4. Their tears that they shed are bottled up, *Psal. 56. 8.* and booked.

5. Their sighs and cries are observed, *Ezek. 9. 4.*

6. Their pains they take with them to make them better, is considered of; as *Lots* among the *Sodomites*, *Gen. 19. 7, 8.* Now all these considered of, what wonder is it that they plead with God, that for the sake of such God would not destroy, but spare a wicked place, where such are as are in such esteem with God.

Thirdly, *From the Petitioners themselves:*

1. They are friends to God, *2 Chron. 20. 7. Isa. 41. 8. Jam. 2. 23.* and what or whom may not they prevail for?



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2. They are *chosen ones*, Neh.9.7. so was *Abraham*; and God cannot deny the suits of his *chosen ones*.

3. Their *hearts* are *faithful to God*, Neh.9.8. and such may prevail much for others: their Prayers shall not be lost, but be like the *bowe of Jonathan that turned not back*, and the *sword of Saul that returned not empty*.

4. They are in *Covenant with God*, Neh.9.8. and such cannot be *denied*, he cannot say them *Nay* in any thing they sue for.

5. They are *obedient to God* in difficult commands, Heb.11.8,17. and what may not such prevail for?

6. They are men *weaned* from the world, and live and converse much in another world, Heb. 11.9,10. Such a man was *Abraham*, and they that are *such*, may get any thing they ask, whoever they be that they make suit for. All which being considered, no wonder that they do so desire that *God would not destroy*, but *spare a wicked place*, especially for those *good* that peradventure may be found therein.

Use 1. for Information: 1. We see that the most excellent of *Saints* bear great good will to the worst of sinners. *Abraham*, that prime Believer, wisheth well to wicked *Sodom*, that it might not be destroyed: and how many a precious Saint pray for those that live worse then ever *Sodom*.

dom did. For, sins committed *under the Gospel*, exceed *Sodom's wickedness*; they love those that hate them, and out of love pray for them. Such will not be brought to think that they love them, yet they are many times got into a corner to pray for them, even when they are tearing them with their tongues, and speaking and doing all the evil they can against them. For my love (sayes David) they are mine enemies; but I give my self to prayer, Psal. 109. 4, 5. Godly ones are full of love, even to their adversaries, and wish well to them that wish no good, but evil to them.

2. We see how wickedly they do, that so ill requite the Saints that wish them well, that they are the men that are had in greatest abomination with them, Prov. 29. 27. Publicans will love those that love them, Mat. 5. 46. these therefore are worse then they, who hate them that love them, and persecute such as pray for them. Deformed persons hate the greatest beauty: so do these hate those that shew forth the greatest beauty of love to them, in praying for them. If Abraham had been in Sodom, as Lot was, they would have no more regarded him, then Lot was regarded by them. Such requital the best of Saints must meet with, and look for from an evil world.

3. We see what love there is in heaven, if there be so much on earth: Oh! how do the Saints love one another there! if while on earth they

they love their enemies, what inexpressible and inconceivable love do they shew to their friends in heaven! Love, that is the bond of perfection, will tye perfection to it self, for perfect will our love to Saints and Angels be. Here are sparks, but there our love will be on a flaming fire; here are little points, but there our love will be in the full Circumference of it; here are atomes and motes of it, but there it will be in the fulness of it; here there are but drops, but there will be a Sea of it.

4. We see what love there is in God himself, that is Love it self, 1 Joh. 4. 8. He is the Everlasting Spring, all that is in the Creature flows from him: and this love he hath shewn to us, when we were enemies to him, Col. 1. 21. Rom. 5. 10. Ours is little, but his is much. Abraham may wish well to Sodom, and a few other Cities more, but Gods love is infinite, he loves the whole world of his Elect, Joh. 3. 16. It's great, and large; it's a Sun, a Sea: and the Sun is not so full of light, nor the Sea of water, as he is of Love. This Spring never dries, this Light ever shines, this Sun never sets, this Sea never fails, this Fire never goes out, but warms our hearts, and will warm them to all Eternity.

5. We see how precious righteous ones be in the Lords sight, that Believers dare for their sakes desire of God to spare the worst of sinners.

They

They are of great account and reckoning with him; His *Peculiar Treasure*, Psal. 135. 4. His *Jewels*, Mal. 3. 17. A *special people to him*, Dent. 7. 6. for *whose sake* Believers are so bold with God, as to desire that the *worst of men* may not be taken away in their sins. Surely they are such as he takes great delight and pleasure in; they are his *choice ones*, more precious then the *gold of Havilah*, then the *golden wedge of Ophir*.

6. We see what *longings* we should have to be for ever with him, who loves his *Righteous ones* so, as that he will *spare the wicked* for their sakes: for so *Abraham* makes account, in that he does so pray for them; *Wilt thou also destroy, and not spare the place for the fifty Righteous that are therein?* Oh how desireable should *His Presence* be, that so tenderly loves *his own*, that he will be *kinde to the wicked* for their sakes? who would *not long to be with him*, who is *Love it self?* to die in the arms and bosom of *the God of Love?*

*Use 2.* for *Terrour* to those that hate the *Righteous*, that are in such *high esteem* with God: they do procure their own ruine the sooner by it; for, for *their sakes* they are spared, and not destroyed; and for a *few of them* judgement is kept off, and not executed upon a very sinning people. For the *good corn*, the *chaff* is not burned; for the *good seed*, the *tares* are not suddenly plucked up.

*Use 3.* for *Humiliation* to the *Righteous*, that  
for

for some worldly Accommodations chuse such places to live in, where there are many wicked men, for though God may for their sakes spare, and not destroy such a place, if there be a considerable number of them, yet they shall finde heart-breaking grief enough, as Lot did, who for outward things chose that place, Gen. 13. 10, 11, 12. with 2 Pet. 2. 7, 8.

Use 4. for Exhortation: 1. To prize Righteous ones, that God so highly prizeth, that Abraham made account that for their sakes he would spare, and not destroy a sinning people. Every one of them is more precious then the rarest Gems and Jewels in the world: they are the excellent ones of the earth, Psal. 16. 3. no precious Pearls in the East or West-Indies to be equalled or compared with them.

2. To delight to be there where many such are, for they are they for whose sakes a sinning people are preserved. Abraham desired that Sodom might be spared for such: it's good to be there therefore, where such are, their company is to be chosen. That place is happy, that is set about with such precious ones.

3. To do as Abraham did for Sodom, to pray for a sinning people, if a considerable number of Righteous be hoped to be found there: Our Prayers shall not be lost, they shall be accepted; and if there be not so many found as we hoped for,



for, they will return into our own bosoms, we shall be the better for such Prayers, whatever become of such a sinning people. They may be destroyed, as the Sodomites were, but they that pray for them shall have their Prayers hung upon the file in heaven, and not one of them shall be forgotten before God. Princes do sometimes forget what Petitions have come before them, but God never does.

Verse 25. *That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked; and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee.*

Doct. VI. **T**Hat it is that that Gods faithful Suppliants wish to be far from the Lord, to slay the Righteous with the Wicked: or that the Righteous should be as the Wicked.

He repeats the phrase twice, to shew his earnest desire that such a thing may never be: as if he should say, God forbid that ever such a thing should be; for so the Hebrew word *Chalilah*, which signifieth a profane thing, and that that is forbidden to be done, holds out: and the Apostle expresseth it by *God forbid*.

Reasons. 1. From God the Lord; or from Christ Jesus, for he is this Lord that Abraham inter-

interceded to in behalf of *Sodom*, as Interpreters make account. 2. From the Righteous. 3. From the Wicked.

First, *From the Lord Jesus*: 1. He is that just and righteous one, *Acts 7. 52.* and therefore one of justice cannot slay the righteous with the wicked. Just men will make more account of the righteous then of the wicked; how much more the just Lord?

2. He loves Righteousness, and hates Wickedness, *Psal. 45. 7.* and he cannot possibly suffer it, that the Righteous should be as the Wicked, or slay the Righteous with the wicked; and therefore suppliants may wish such a thing as that to be far from him.

3. He beholds the righteous with an amiable face, and looks upon them with an eye of favour, *Psal. 111. 7.* and therefore cannot but put a great difference betwixt the one sort and the other, and cannot put them in the same condition, so that the one should be as the other.

4. He is the Judge of all the earth; by the Text: and therefore cannot but do right. [But of that I must speak more in the next Doctrine, and therefore onely touch upon it now.]

5. He is wont to be merciful to righteous ones that fear him, and he cannot leave his old wont. This the Psalmist pleads, *Psal. 119. 132.* Look thou upon me and be merciful to me, as thou usest

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usest to do to those that fear thy Name. It would not be according to his custom and wont, it would be otherwise then he useth to do, if he should not be merciful to such: and how should he then slay the Righteous with the Wicked?

6. He will render to a man his work, and cause every man to finde according to his wayes, and therefore humble ones may earnestly wish it to be far from him, to slay the Righteous with the Wicked. Job 34. 10, 11. so Elisha speaks, Far be it from God, that he should do wickedness, and from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity: for the work of a man shall he render unto him, &c.

Secondly, From the Righteous: 1. They are tender of his Name, and therefore he cannot but be tender of them, and let the righteous be in better case then the wicked. They are described to be such as love his Name, Psal. 69. 36.

2. They are such as it is a joy to them to do judgement, and if so, then much more will the Lord do judgement, and rejoyce so to do: and therefore cannot but put a difference between the righteous and the wicked.

3. They are such as are more excellent then others be, Prov. 12. 26. many wayes more excellent; in their descent, being born of God, Joh. 1. 13. in their honourable Relation, being Brethren to Christ, Joh. 20. 17. Heb. 2. 11, 12. in their spiritual food, which is Christs flesh that they feed upon,

upon, and his blood which they drink of, *Joh. 6. 55.* in their spiritual clothing, which is *Christs Righteousness*, *Isa. 61. 10.* *1 Cor. 1. 30.* in their attendance, having the *Angels* to encamp about them, and minister to them, *Psal. 34. 7.* *Heb. 1. 14.* in their great *Inheritance*, *Mat. 25. 34.* Now being all these wayes more excellent then others, it must needs be that a difference must be made between them; and that the righteous shall not be as the wicked; and far be it from the Lord that it should be otherwise.

4. They are they, and they onely, that God hath any glory by upon earth: the wicked bring in none to him, but put all the dishonour they can upon him; and *Isa. 42. 8.* he is tender of his glory; and how then should he *slay the Righteous with the Wicked*? We may plead it with the Lord as *Abraham* did, *That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the Righteous with the Wicked,* or that the *Righteous should be as the Wicked*, that be far from thee.

5. They are such as he takes pleasure in, *Psal. 149. 4.* and how can this be, if he should *slay the Righteous with the Wicked*? See *Cant. 2. 14.*

6. They are such as he meets in a way of favour, *Isa. 64. 5.* and if the *Righteous should be as the Wicked*, how could this be? he would rather meet them like an enemy, then in a friendly way, if he should *slay the Righteous with the Wicked.*

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Thirdly, *From the Wicked*: 1. They are such as the Lord *abhors*, his very Soul *hates* them, Psal. 11. 5. and should not Suppliants then plead with the Lord, that he would put a difference between them and his righteous ones? See Psal. 5. 5.

2. They are *appointed to wrath*, *destinated to destruction*, 1 Thess. 5. 9. and can the Lord then put no difference between them, but that the one should be as the other? This we should plead.

3. They *fear not God*, Psal. 55. 19. and how should it be then but that he should put a difference between those that *fear him*, and *those that fear him not*? God forbid that it should be otherwise.

4. They are such as *hate the Righteous*, Prov. 29. 27. and therefore that the righteous should be as the wicked, we should plead it with the Lord, that it may be *far from him to do after such a manner*.

5. They are *the Children of the Devil*, 1 Joh. 3. 10. and that the *Children of God* should be in no better condition then the *Children of the Devil*, that we should strongly plead with him, *That be far from thee to do after this manner*.

6. They are such as whose *sins cry for vengeance*, as these *Sodomites* sins did. Now that the righteous and they should share *alike in punishment*, this were hard, and we should plead hard  
with



with God, that he would not do after this manner; *That be far from thee*, sayes Abraham, *that be far from thee*.

*Use 1. for Information.* 1. We see that humble Suppliants have, and ought to have a special eye at the glory of God in their Supplications that they bring before him. Thus does Abraham here, he is very tender of the glory of God, would have no dishonour to reflect upon him, by *slaying the Righteous with the Wicked*; *That be far from thee* (saith he) *to do after this manner*, Gods glory is that that we should aim at in all our holy addresses in Prayer to him, as the first *Petition* in the Lords Prayer holds out to us: that's the mark we must shoot at in all we do, 1 Cor. 10. 31. and much more when we come to pray to him, we are to have respect to the glory of his Name, and that no reproach may be fastened upon the Holy One. His Name is worth more then the Lives and Souls of all the men in the world, and infinitely above all created Beings.

2. We see that they that plead most with God in behalf of others, are most like to Abraham; for so did he. Oh how earnest was he in behalf of Sodom, that the Righteous might not be destroyed with the Wicked! They that pray must plead, if they would walk in the steps of Abraham; *That be far from thee*, being twice repeated, shews, that

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that (as his) so our Prayers should be earnest that we bring before the Lord. *Incense* was not offered without *fire*; nor our Prayers without *feruency*, Jam. 5. 16.

3. We see what *true love* godly ones express one towards another. *Abraham* out of tender love prays, that the *Righteous* may not be destroyed with the *Wicked*. The truth is, there is no *true love*, but an *image* onely of it in other men; but that which is *love in truth*, is onely found among godly ones: They are partakers of the Divine Nature, and therefore shew forth love one to another. *God is love*, 1 Joh. 4. 8. and where his Image is, as is in all the Saints, there is sweetest love expressed one to another.

4. We see wherein *true love* is expressed; it is evidenced in our earnest Prayers that we put up one for another. *Abraham* so judged, and therefore pleads with *God* in behalf of those *Righteous* ones in *Sodom*, that they may not be destroyed with the *wicked*. There's no *true love* like that that is expressed in our fervent Prayers one for another. Prayer is an *holy breathing*, Lam. 3. 56. and our love one to another is never breathed forth more, then in our Prayers each for other. They have a *sweet breath*, and their love is sweet that pray most fervently one for another.

5. We see that they that do not plead earnestly

in Prayer for *Righteous ones*, are neither heirs of *Abrahams faith* nor love to those righteous ones that he earnestly intreated for: there are those that pray slightly and superficially for them, but *Abraham* was fervent in spirit for those he prayed for; *That be far from thee, That be far from thee, that the Righteous should be as the wicked.* Hollow, slight, perfunctory Prayers for others, argue that there's neither faith nor love in such an heart. That fire is gone out that the bellows cannot kindle; so if the blast of our desires be not fervent for others, the fire of love is quite put out.

6. We see that if we be to be earnest and fervent in our Prayers for others, how fervent are we to be for *our selves*, and for those that are and ought to be as dear as our own Souls? for our own Country, and the Land of our Nativ-ty. Oh how earnest should we be that both *we* and *they* may be spared, and not destroyed, when other wicked ones shall not escape! we should double our Requests for our selves and them, as *Abraham* here does, that *we* and *they* may be preserved from the fire of his indignation. The very Heathens had a love to their Country, and their utmost desires and endeavours were for the preservation of that, as we see in *Tully*, and *Pompey*, and others of them. Oh what desires then should Christians have, as for themselves,

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so for their *Country*, that is as themselves? *Luke*  
4. 23.

*Use 2. for Terror* to wicked men: They are not those that Believers pray so earnestly for, but onely because of the *Righteous* that are among them. It was not for the sakes of the filthy *Sodomites* that *Abraham* was so earnest with the Lord, but for the *Righteous* that he thought might be among them, and for their sakes desires that the place may be spared.

*Use 3. for Humiliation* to those of Gods people that are not so fervent for others, as they are for themselves. *Abraham* was fervent for others, and doubles his speech on behalf of the righteous that he thought to be in *Sodom*; and if we do not double our Requests for others, as well as for our selves, we are not of the spirit of *Abraham*, nor tread in his blessed steps: and that should put an holy blush into our faces.

*Use 4. for Exhortation*: 1. To plead hard in behalf of others, and double our files, and be fervent in our requests for them. We cannot be too earnest in our desires for them; that that we sue unto God for, is worth the strongest of our affections to be put forth in our Prayers for them: So *Abraham* thought, and so should we.

2. To call upon us to be thankful when we pray earnestly for others; for, we naturally slack our pace in this: it is therefore supernatu-

rall, and of grace, if we do as *Abraham* did here, and Grace is to be exalted for it.

3. To prize those that are powerful Pleaders with the Lord in behalf of others; they are the children of *Abraham*, and shall be blessed with him, We prize those that plead other Causes strongly; Oh how should they then be prized that plead strongly with the Lord?

4. To be earnest for those that are dear to us, for those that are our bone and flesh, and our very bowels. If *Abraham* pleaded so for those in *Sodom* that were Righteous, how should we for those that are so near and dear to us? the strength of our hearts should be put forth in our Requests for them.

5. To call upon us to pray earnestly for *England*, the Land of our Nativity, the place of our Fathers Sepulchres: Who have we cause to pray for, if not for our Mother that bare us, and bred us, and dandled us upon her knees, and nursed us by her sides? Oh that *England* might yet live in Gods sight! Oh that the Righteous there may not be forgotten, nor destroyed, but that the Arm of the Lord may be made bare, and be mighty for them!

6. To love the Lord, that stirs up any to plead for us, and to shew their love in being earnest with God on our behalf. It is grace and love in the Lord towards us, and our love in the utmost extent



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extent and latitude of it should be drawn out to him. Our hearts should be filled with love, that sets his *Abrahams* to plead for us; his fire should kindle ours, and cause it to flame and fly upwards.

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Verse 25. — *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*

Doct. VII. **T**Hat the Lord Jesus Christ is the Judge of all the Earth. So he is styled here in the Text.

For opening of which, let me shew,

1. How it does appear that he is the Judge.
2. In what respects he is the Judge of all the earth, as *Abraham* styles him.
3. What manner of Judge he is.
4. Why he is such a Judge.
5. The Uses.

Q. 1. How does it appear that he is the Judge?

Ans. 1. A Judge rides in Circuit, as it is laid of *Samuel*, 1 Sam. 7. 16. and so other Judges do: So does the Lord Jesus, he goes his Circuit, and judgeth in all places; there's no place on Earth or Sea, but he attends the Office of a Judge in it: even in this world he is judging some or other every day, and is going in Circuit all the world over. But this is not mainly nor principally intended, though not altogether excluded in this

Title that *Abraham* gives unto the Lord: for *Psal. 94. 2.* the Psalmist prayes, *Life up thy self, thou Judge of the earth; render a reward to the proud:* Even in this world he judgeth every where.

2. A Judge judgeth at the place of judgement: so does Christ, and that is in the Clouds, *Mat. 26. 64.* there his Throne is to be expected, and it will be a glorious Throne, *Mat. 25. 31.*

3. A Judge judgeth at the time appointed for judgement; so does Christ, *Acts 17. 31.* and so *Rom. 2. 16.* he speaks of the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. Hence also it is that so frequent mention is made of the Day of Judgement, and the Last day, *Joh. 12. 48.* and the judgement of the great day, *Jude 6.*

4. A Judge hears all Evidences, and judgeth according to them: so does Christ according to the evidence of mens Conscience accusing, or excusing, *Rom. 2. 15, 16.*

5. A Judge judgeth according to Law; so does Christ judge at the last day, according to the Law that he hath given, *Rom. 2. 16.* *Joh. 12. 48.* The word that I speak to you shall judge you at the last day.

6. A Judge passeth Sentence of Absolution and of Condemnation, according to the condition of the persons that are judged: so does Christ, *Mat. 25. 34. & 41.*

7. A Judge sees to the putting of his Sentence in Execution: so does Christ, *Mat. 25. 46.* These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the Righteous into life eternal.

Quest. 2. In what respects is he the Judge of all the Earth?

Ans. 1. In that all Nations of the Earth that ever were, are, or shall be, shall be gathered before him, *Mat. 25. 32. 2 Cor. 5. 10.*

2. In that all Souls and ranks of men upon the Earth, in what Age of the world soever they have lived, shall be judged by him; the greatest Kings and Emperours of the Earth shall not escape, *Rom. 14. 10.*

3. In that every particular man must give an account of himself to God, *Rom. 14. 12.* which shews that he is the Judge of all the Earth, none are exempted.

4. In that all of each Sex shall come to judgement; the weaker Sex as well as the stronger, women as well as men: the word *All* comprehends them as well as others.

5. In that all of all Ages must stand before him, old and young, (children, youth, men of riper years) yea those that stoop for age. This the word *All* holds out also, *2 Cor. 5. 10. Eccles. 11. 9.*

6. In that all of all Callings must appear before him: Magistrates, Ministers, Merchants, Tradesmen, Marriners, Husbandmen, Lawyers;

all

all of every Vocation, Occupation, and Calling to this or that Imployment, must stand before him. Paul told the Scholars at Athens that they must be judged, Acts 17.31.

7. In that all that live idly without a Calling must appear. The Athenians and strangers there, spent their time in hearing and telling some new thing, and in nothing else, Acts 17.21. and these Paul tells Christ will be Judge 20. ver. 31. So all other idle persons, that spend their time in gaming and other loose walking, must come to judgement.

8. In that all of all conditions, good and bad, the righteous and the wicked, must be judged by him, Eccles. 3.17.

9. In that all that have been corrupt Judges, and have passed unrighteous Sentences in Judgement-seats, must be judged by him; as Eccles. 3.

16,17. Judges on Earth must be judged another day, and if in the place of Righteousness there hath been Wickedness, that will be reserved for another hearing, where Bribes will take no place.

10. In that all the nearest and dearest Relations must compeer before him; Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children, Ministers and People, Masters and Servants, Tutors and Pupils, and whatever other Relations can be named, all must have Him to be their Judge: So that Abraham might well style him The Judge of all the Earth.

Quest. 3. What manner of Judge is he?

Ans. 1. A Righteous Judge, 2 Tim. 4. 8. hence Acts 17. 31. He shall judge the world in Righteousness.

2. A Dreadful Judge to his enemies, Luke 19. 27. He will speak dreadfully, look dreadfully, deal dreadfully with them, Mat. 25. 41.

3. A Comfortable Judge to his friends, to those he is a Friend and Saviour to, Mat. 25. 34.

4. A Wise Judge: There are some wise Judges upon earth, but none like him. Solomon was a wise Judge, 1 Kings 3. 24—27. but none like him for wisdom, that styles himself Greater then Solomon.

5. An Unerring Judge: Other Judges may erre upon their Seats of Justice, but there is no error in him, no obliquity, no iniquity with the Lord, no accepting of persons, nor taking of gifts, 2 Chron. 19. 7. Bribes may blinde men, and lead them out of the way of righteousness, but God regards not gifts, he cannot be blinded by them, though men may. He cannot erre in judgement.

6. A Pityful Judge: Some Judges on Earth have been so pityful, as that they never condemned any, but they have wept over them; but no Judge on earth like him for pity. See how he wept over Jerusalem, when he foresaw her judgement afar off, Luke 13. 34.

7. A Royal Judge, such a Judge as is a King, Mat.



*Mat. 25. 34.* Other Judges may be great Men, but they are not Kings; but he is a King sitting in judgement.

8. *An All-seeing Judge*, that knows all hearts, *Rev. 2. 23.* and therefore cannot be deceived with vain pretexs, and put off with excuses that have nothing in them.

9. *A Patient Judge*, that will hold on judging till the work be ended. Hence the day of Judgement is called *The great day*; as in other respects, so in regard of the length of it, as *Junius* observes: which holds out the Judge's patience in seeing all done before he end the work.

Quest. 4. *Why is he the Judge of all the Earth?*

Ans. 1. From the Father, who 1. hath designed him to this work, *Acts 17. 31.* 2. Knows when it will be, *Mat. 24. 36.* 3. Hath committed all judgement to him, *Joh. 5. 22.* 4. Aims at the honour of the Son in so doing, *ver. 23.*

2. From Christ himself. 1. He hath suffered, and is therefore thus honoured, *Phil. 2. 8, 9.* 2. He had the promise of this made to him long before he suffered, *Isa. 53. 11, 12.*

3. He is the one Law-giver, and therefore the whole Scripture is called *The word of Christ*, *Col. 3. 16.* and being the Law-giver, it's meet he should be Judge also.

4. He is our Advocate with the Father, and is called *Iesus Christ the Righteous*, *1 Joh. 2. 1.* and the

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the more righteous he is, the fitter he is to be the Judge.

Obj. But how did Abraham know him to be the Judge of all the Earth, so long before his Incarnation?

Ans. 1. Why not as well as Enoch, that was long before him? Jude ver. 14, 15.

2. Abraham was called the friend of God, Jam. 2:23. and had it revealed to him, as we reveal much to friends.

3. The Lord knew not how to hide other secrets from him, Gen. 18. 17. and therefore not this.

4. Abraham was an heavenly-minded man, Heb. 11. 10. that had in his eye a blessed state of glory, and could not but know that there was a judgement to come, and that He it was that was the Judge of all the Earth.

Use 1. for Information. 1. We see the great dignity that the Lord Christ is exalted to after his deep humiliation; He is the Judge of all the Earth, the Father highly honours him. After sufferings comes the greatest dignity, they usher in glory, Luke 24. 26. the Father as a reward of his deep abasement, advanceth him to this height of honour, to be Judge of all the Earth.

2. We see that all the Earth had need stand in awe of him, for he is the Judge of all the earth; especially all wicked ones of the earth. Guilty

Malefactors

Malefactors fear their Judge; so should all the guilty ones of the earth fear this great Judge and not onely they, but others also, that expect favour from him, *Psal. 4. 4.*

3. We see that the greatest Kings and Judges of the Earth had need be wise, and submit themselves to him that is the Judge of all the Earth, *Psal. 2. 10, 11, 12.* for he will one day call them to an account, and they must stand before the Judge of all the Earth: He respecteth not the person of Princes, but will call them to the Barre of his Tribunal, as well as other men. They are all the work of his hands, and he will be a Judge to them all: He will make no difference between Silks and Leather, between Cloth of Gold and the vilest Raiment: Men may make difference between great ones and others, but the Judge of all the Earth cannot, will not: they must bow the knee to him, as well as other, stoop to him, kiss him, and make obeisance to him.

4. We see that the Patriarks of old did not onely know that there was to be a day of judgement, but had serious thoughts and meditations of it, and knew who the Judge of all the Earth was. Thus Abraham, and Enoch the seventh from Adam, even in the beginning of the world prophetieth of the End of the world, and of the Day of Judgement, *Jude ver. 14, 15.* and if they had such serious thoughts of that day, how much more should

should we, upon whom the ends of the world are come? We are upon the last hour, as John calls it 1. Joh. 2. 18. and therefore our thoughts, and looks, and longings, and breathings should be after that, and we should meditate much of this Judge's coming. They that have but a short time to think of a serious matter, had need to think intensely and seriously of it: so we of the Judges coming.

5. We see what preparation we should all make to meet the Judge at his coming. There is great preparation for the coming of other Judges at the Assize, Oh how then should we prepare for his coming who is Judge of all the Earth? especially considering that the time is short that is allotted to us. They that have a great work to do, and a very little time to do it in, had need besuare themselves: so had we in this solemn work of fitting our selves for the coming of this great Judge; we should not let him finde us without our dress, but be in readiness, Mat. 24. 44. A Spouse prepares for her Husbands coming; so should we for Christs coming.

6. We see that all the Earth have need to make Supplication to their Judge. All sorts and ranks of men upon earth had need desire, and earnestly intreat that he may be a merciful Judge to them; and in this day of grace, that they may find grace in his sight. There are those that at the Assize will supplicate the Judge, and earnestly cry,

Good

Good my Lord, Good my Lord shew mercy to a poor Prisoner; but they speak too late: So at the last day there will be those that will say, Lord, Lord, and intreat for mercy, *Mat. 7. 21, 22, 23.* but the time is past, they come too late, and so finde no favour. That that we must do in this kinde, must be done while the day of grace lasts, as it is *2 Cor. 6. 2. Heb. 3. 7.* If the door be shut, if the date be out, it is not Lord, Lord, open unto us, that will serve the turn.

Use 2. for Terror to all the Earth, that have no interest in this Judge, that do nothing but provoke this Judge, and cast reproach upon him, how will they do to stand before him in the great day of his appearing? If Malefactors should rail upon an earthly Judge, and cast dirt and dishonour upon him, could such expect any favour? How then can it be that they should finde any favour that rail upon the Judge of all the Earth, and throw dirt and dishonour upon this glorious and dreadful One?

Use 3. for Humiliation to the Saints, that are too inordinately afraid of the day of Judgement: why should they, when their Redeemer is to be their Judge? He that hath bought them with his Blood, and paid such a Ransome for them, will not cast them away, that he hath paid so dearly for.

Use 4. for Exhortation: 1. To honour this Judge, and let all the Earth do it. Other Judges are



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are honourable, and have honour put upon them ;  
Oh how much more then should he ?

2. To tremble to sin against him. Who would  
provoke and exasperate him that is to be his  
Judge ? let all the Earth then fear before him.

3. To sue for grace at the Throne of Grace  
in the day of grace, that this Judge may be a  
Friend to us in the day of Judgement. What suits  
are made to Earthly Judges ? Oh how much  
more to him ?

4. To plead with him to do right ; as in the  
Text. [*But of that more in the next Note.*]

5. To us Ministers, to preach the Word, to be  
instant in season, out of season, as ever we will  
answer it at the great day of his appearing, 2 Tim.

4. 1, 2.  
6. To pray always, that we may escape the  
Judges severity at the last day, Luke 21. 36.

Use 5. for Consolation: 1. To those that he  
is a Redeemer to, this Judge will acquit them.

2. That he will take all unrighteous to do, that  
have perverted justice.

3. That all the wicked of the earth shall be  
judged.

4. That all the righteous shall be delivered.

3. He commands other Judges to do right.

Doct. 1. 6. Judge righteously between every man  
and his brother. Doct. 19. 6. Verse

com.

Verse 25. — Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

Doct. VIII. **T**hat the Judge of all the Earth cannot but do right; and we may plead it with him as he is such a Judge to do right.

Thus did Abraham, Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right?

For opening of which, let me shew,

1. Why he cannot but do right. 2. Why we are to plead it with him, as he is such a Judge to do right. 3. The Use.

*Reasons of the first Branch.*

1. He cannot but do right, because he is a Righteous Judge, 2 Tim. 4.8. He is called the just one, Acts 7. 52. and just Judges do that which is right; how much more he?

2. Because he loveth Righteousness in us, Psal. 11. 7. and therefore sure he cannot but do right himself. That which we love, we put in practice; we cannot do contrary to what we love; so it is with Christ, the Judge of all the Earth, he loves Righteousness in us, and therefore cannot do contrary to what he loves.

3. He commands other Judges to do right, Deut. 1. 16. judge righteously between every man and his brother. So 2 Chron. 19. 6, 7. And he that

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commands other Judges to do right, will certainly do right himself.

4. He complains of wrong dealing, and of the proceeding of wrong judgement. Hab. 1. 4. The law is slack, and judgement doth never go forth; for the wicked doth compass about the righteous, therefore wrong judgement proceedeth. Now if the Lord finde fault himself with wrong dealing, he cannot do wrong himself, but will do right.

5. He punisheth those that do pervert judgement and justice. The Chaldeans were sent against the injustice of the Land of Iſrael, and God took vengeance of them by them with great severity, Hab. 1. 6, 10. Now if the Lord punish iniquity and injustice in men, he must needs, as Judge of all the Earth, do right himself.

6. He is with those that are just Judges, in the righteous judgement that they pass in their judgement-seats, 2 Chron. 19. 6. He is with them to assist them, to direct them, to protect them, to encourage them, to uphold them, to sustain and honour them, to bless them: and if so, then he cannot but do right himself.

7. He respects no persons, takes no gifts, cannot be bribed, or blinded with reward. Some Judges may, but he cannot; some others may pervert judgement by such wayes, but he will not, 2 Chron. 19. 7. and therefore he cannot but do right. Let men do wrong, and deal unjustly, and

He will do right

This shot repeats the previous one, but with different lighting.

Verse 25. — *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*

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do violence, yet this Judge will not, cannot, he treads never a step but in the way of Righteousness.

8. He will bring such to judgement at the great day, as have done iniquity in Judgement-seats. Eccles. 3:16, 17. I saw under the Sun (sayes Solomon) the place of judgement, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there: I said in my heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked; for there is a time there for every purpose, and for every work. Now if God will be severe against unrighteous Judges at the last day, how can it be but that as Judge he must do right himself?

Reasons of the second Branch. Why we are to plead it with him as he is Judge to do right.  
1. Because it is not meet that his Name should have any dishonour put upon it; and therefore we are to plead with him to do right: for if he could possibly do any iniquity (which he cannot) it would reflect dishonour upon him. Psal. 11:1. Mat. 6:9.

2. Because if he did not right, he could not judge the world: it is essential to his Office of being Judge, to do righteously; Rom. 3:5, 6. and that we may plead with him.

3. Because his honour is exalted by doing right. If Righteousness exalts a Nation, then much more the Judge of all Nations; and therefore we may well plead it with him.

4. Be-

**Doct. 6.** *He cannot but do right.* 101

**4.** Because *all mouths are stopped* when right is done. It is so when Judges on earth do right, they that would *carpe*, cannot tell how to do it. So it is when *the Judge of all the Earth* does right, then no man dare open his mouth against him.

**5.** Because when this Judge doth right, there will be loud acclamations made. As when a King upon the Throne judgeth righteously, all his People will sound forth his praise: so when this King judgeth righteously, all will sing aloud his praise, *Psal. 98. throughout.*

**6.** Because when he doth right he will be feared. It is said of *Solomon*, when he did that that was right between the two women that contended about the living and dead child, that *All Israel* heard of the judgement that the King had judged, and they feared the King, *1 Kin. 3. 28.* Oh how will then the Judge of all the Earth, when he does right, be feared of all his people: and this we may well plead.

**Use 1. for Information.** 1. We see how unlike they are to Jesus Christ, that sit on judgement-seats and do not that which is right, but pervert judgement, and no not execute justice in the earth. There are those that will turn aside the right of the poor, and will not help the afflicted in the gate, but will deal unrighteously, when it is in the power of their hand to help and succour helpless ones. The Judge of all the Earth cannot

H 3 *but*

but do right; Oh how little then do these resemble him? He shines with the rays and beams of his Righteousness, but they have not so much as one beam of this Sun to shine forth with, but are black and dark all over, and covered with injustice, as the sky is covered with thick Clouds and darkness. In stead of putting on righteousness, and being clothed with it, as Job speaks, Job 29. 14. and making judgement a robe, and a diadem, they put on unrighteousness, and tie it fast in a garment to them. Many such there are in the world, but they have nothing of the Image of Christ upon them; The Judge of all the Earth cannot but see right.

2. We see that this Judge will cause all unjust Judges to stand before His Judgement-seat, and pass a righteous Sentence upon them: Though they would want right, yet they shall have right and justice from him at the great day of his appearing. Then he will reckon with them for all their cruelty and injustice, for all the wrong that they have done to his poor ones; for all the tricks and quibbles that they have devised to pervert Law, and Justice, and Equity: then they shall hear his righteous Sentence pronounced upon them, and feel the stroke of his righteous hand against them. The Judge of all the Earth, who doth right, will pay them for all their wrong they have done, and the proudest of them shall know it, Eccles. 3. 16, 17.

3. We see what all their *Bribery* will come to that they have perverted justice by; and all the *Gifts* they have been blinded with, to go out of the way of *Righteousness* with; the Judge of all the Earth, that doth right, will reward them according to their works. Those *Bribes* that they have taken will be fire to consume all they leave behinde them, *Job 15. 34.* and kindle hell fire by the breath of God against them, to consume them to all eternity. *Bribes* are to them, as the worm was to *Jonas's* gourd, that smote it, and withered it; they smite and wither their *Estates, Names, Families, Bodies and Souls*, and bring ruine and destruction upon them for ever.

4. We see what need *Kings*, and all the *Judges* of the Earth have to be wise, and to kiss the Son; for he that is Judge of all the Earth cannot but do right, and they shall have right and justice from him, as well as other men. If they honour him not, obey him not, yield not homage and subjection to him, live not according to his Laws, lay not down their *Crowns*, and *Scepters*, and *Robes* at his feet; if their *Laws* be contrary to his, and their *Sentences* that they pronounce in their judgement-seats, come most to the right *Rules* of his holy Word, in clearing the guilty, and oppressing the innocent without a cause, let them know, that this Judge will do right to them in condemning them, and there is no respect of persons with him.

5. We see that surely he will not stay the Righteous with the Wicked, in the day of the destruction of the Wicked; for, the Judge of all the Earth cannot but do right; he will put a difference between the one and the other, he will not consume Gold and dross together. [But of that we spake before.]

6. We see that we may not marvel, though sometimes temporal afflictions befall the righteous, and wicked ones escape; for, the Judge of all the Earth cannot but do right in all his dispensations to his own dear ones. Something he sees that it is just with him to afflict them for, and it is in love and faithfulness to them, and they see it, Psal. 119. 75. and for the wicked that escape these, there's more behinde for them, and they shall have right done them in another manner; they are reserved men to another day, and for another time, 2 Pet. 2. 9. Job 21. 30. and those afflictions of the Righteous are but as the prickings of a pin, compared with the punishment of the damned in Hell, which shall be stung with Scorpions to all eternity.

7. We see what love we owe to the Lord Jesus, that is the Judge that cannot but do right. All men love such a Judge as does right to every man; Oh what love then is this Judge worthy of, that cannot but do right to all? Every one (sayes Solomon) shall kiss his lips, that gives a right



*right answer*, Prov. 24. 26. and if so, how should we in way of love kiss those blessed lips, that as a Judge gives a *right answer*, and *cannot but do right* in all his dispensations of himself to us?

8. We see what cause we have to speak good of his Name: All men speak well of such a Judge as does right to all; his name is renowned all the Country over, his fame spreads all a Kingdom over: Oh how well should we then speak of the Judge of all the Earth? how renowned should his Name be? how should his Fame spread all the world over, that *cannot but do right* to all? we should make his Name to be remembered to all generations, Psal. 45. 17.

9. We see that if we would be like to him, we must *do right* to all we converse with: *do right* to them in their Names, take need we wrong them not there: Exod. 23. 1. *Thou shalt not raise a false report.* *Do right* to them in their Estates, take heed we wrong them not there, 1 Thess. 4. 6. *Do right* to them in their Families, take heed of wronging them there: *Do right* to them in their Consciences, take heed of wronging them there, impose nothing upon them there that Conscience cannot bear. Conscience, like the Eye, is a tender thing, and may not be touched too hard, beware of this. *Do right* to them in their Callings and Conditions, *af. life*; give Magistrates that that is their due, in honour, obedience, homage and

and support in their places, *Titus* 3. 1. Give *Ministers* their due, 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. take heed we wrong them not in reference to their *Callings*: and so we are to do them right every way, if we would be like to the *Judge of all the Earth*, that cannot but do right.

10. We see that they that do not right shall not have him a *Friend* to them, be they who they will be: They that wrong their Brethren in their *Names*, *Estates*, *Families*, or any other way, shall be sure to have him to be an *Avenger* to them. He cannot be a *Friend* to any, but such as do right to every one that they have occasion to converse with: and to have the *Judge of all the Earth* to be our *Friend*, will be worth something at the great day of his appearing.

Use 2. for *Terrour*: 1. To all *injurious* *wrongful-dealing persons*, that know not how to do right, but all the wrong that ever they can invent they are willing to do, against those that deserve well at their hands: Oh how will they look the *Judge of all the Earth* in the face, that doth right, another day?

2. To *Unjust judges*, that though they know, yet will not do right, but deal *unjustly* upon their *Seats of justice*, *Psal.* 82. 2—5. He that does right will have something to say to these one day; and then they shall know it had been well for them if they had done right. And though they have ac-

cepted

*deceitful persons*, yet he will not accept *their persons*, how great and mighty soever they be.

Use 3. for *Humiliation*, for all that want of *just dealing* that is found amongst us in bargaining, buying, selling, in breaking promises, in dishonest dealings many wayes: Oh that we could be ashamed of our wrong doings! when shall it once be? I blush to speak what was once said in one of our Pulpits; *New-England hath many godly men in it, but but a few honest.* It was true in his sense, though there can be no godliness, where honesty is not joyned with it, 2 Tim. 2. 2.

Use 4. for *Exhortation*: 1. To honour and exalt the Judge of all the Earth that doth right: Whom should we exalt, if not him? If other righteous Judges belisted up in name and praise, much more *He that is the Great Judge*, that cannot wrong any, but doth right to all.

2. To us all to follow him, and do right to all men that we have any dealings with, in bargaining, buying, selling; and in all our promises that we make, let us be true and just in them, though we lose by it, we shall else never come in Heaven, nor be true Members of the Church on Earth, *Psal. 15. 1, 4.*

3. To have no fellowship with them that deal unjustly, they have no fellowship with Christ, *Psal. 94. 20.* and therefore we are to have no fellowship with them.

4. To

4. To give this Judge his right, that *does right* to all; give him his due in all the duties of *love* and *faith*, and *obedience* that he calls for.

5. To leave our *cause* with him, when we are any way wronged, he will do us right: we need not seek to revenge our selves, *Prov. 20. 22.*

6. To beware we wrong not *fatherless ones*, for this Judge will *plead their cause*, and do them right, *Prov. 23. 10. 11.*

7. To do right to them that *wrong us*; this *Nature* strives against, but *Grace* must like oyle be above, *Prov. 24. 29.*

8. To long for the day of his appearing, when he will be sure to do right to all wronged ones.

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*Verse 16. And the Lord said, If I finde in Sodom fifty righteous within the City, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.*

**W**E now come to the Lords first Answer that he makerh to *Abrahams* first Request; viz. That if there were fifty Righteous found there within the City, he would spare all the place for their sakes.

Whence we learn this Note in general in the first place, which is,

Doct. IX. **T**hat the Lord is a God hearing Prayer, and granting the desires of his Servants that sue to him, Psal. 65, 2. 1 Joh. 5. 14, 15.

For opening of which, let me shew,  
 1. How it does appear that he is a God hearing Prayer, and granting the desires of his Servants that sue to him. 2. How he hears them, and grants their desires. 3. Why he hears and thus grants. 4. The Uses.

Quest. 1. How does it appear that he is a God bearing Prayer, and granting the desires of his Servants that sue to him?

Ans. 1. In that he is a Great King, Psal. 47. 2. & 95. 3. and they that are great Kings have open ears, and enlarged hearts, to grant the desires of those that sue to them. Ask on my mother (sayes Solomon) for I will not say thee nay, 1 King. 2. 20. What is thy petition, Queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee. And what is thy request? and it shall be performed to the half of the Kingdome. Great Princes think it their honour thus to do, Eph. 7. 2. how much more the Lord, who is the Great King over all the earth?

2. In that his Servants bless him for this, Psal. 66. 18, 19, 20. When Princes are bountiful in granting the desires of their Suppliants, they  
 come



come off with great thanks : and *their* enlarged hearts in thankfulness, shews that he is a God hearing and granting the desires that they put up to him. Great acknowledgements argue great favours, great thanks, great bounty.

3. In that his Servants have *this* confidence, : Joh. 5. 14, 15. and their confidence in him does not deceive them. Confidence in an unfaithfull man, is as a broken tooth, and a foot out of joynt, Prov. 25. 19. it will deceive him as a broken tooth will him that eateth, and a foot out of joynt him that goeth : but confidence in the faithful God will never deceive a man, but let him go to him in way of Request for any thing that he needs, that stands with his glory, and he shall have it.

4. In that he hears the cry of the young Ravens, Psal. 147. 9. and if so, much more will he hear the cry of his Servants that sue to him. Ravens are of the worst kinde of fowls, of a devouring nature, that feed of dead Carrion, and are sometimes in want, and after their manner cry to God, and if he will hear such a creaking cry as that, much more will he hear the cry of his believing Supplicants, and grant them what they sue unto him for.

5. In that he is not sought in vain, Isa. 45. 19. I said not to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain. Men may be sued unto, and sought, and desired to do this and that, but such suits may be in vain, and their expectations frustrate, and they may  
get

get no grant of their desires; and be as the Nobles little ones, that came to the pits and found no water, but returned with their vessels empty, Jer. 14. 3. and such men that they sue to may be like *Jabs* brethren, that deceived him as a brook, and as the *ream* of brooks, (which seem to promise something, but perform nothing) which vanish away by the heat, and are consumed out of their place, Job 6. 15, 16, 17. Thus it is with men that are sought unto, they will miserably fail those that sue to them, and all their requests will be in vain: But never any of the seed of *Jacob* sought the Lord in vain, but found him a faithful God, having an open ear to hear, and an open heart and hand to give and grant the requests of those that sue unto him. See *Psal.* 145. 19.

6. In that he *delights* in our Prayers: *Prov.* 15. 8. *The prayer of the upright is his delight:* *Cant.* 2. 14. *Let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice.* Now Prayer being so delightful to him, being as it were sweetest musick and melody to him, what wonder is it if he *hears* and *grants* all that we sue unto him for. If *Herod*, that was delighted in a dancing *Minion*, would come off with whatsoever she should ask, to half a Kingdome, *Mark* 6. 22, 23. Oh! what will not the Lord come off with to those that sue to him? *Whatsoever they ask shall be granted to them, Mat.* 21. 22. *Joh.* 16. 23. *God will not be out-bidden by man:* what

what he is delighted with shall have a greater reward then any King on Earth can give.

Quest. 2. How does he hear them, and grant their desires that they put up to him?

Ans. 1. Sometimes very speedily, Isa. 58. 9. *Thou shalt call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am:* which is a marvellous condescendency in the great God, and hath more in it then I am able to express; it is like that in Isa. 45. 11. as if Prayer had the command of the great God. But withall it holds out his speedy answer of Prayer: So Isa. 65. 24. *While they are yet speaking, &c.* Nehemiah got a speedy answer to his ejaculatory Prayer, Neh. 2. 4—8. So Ezra had a speedy answer, Ezra 8. 23. So Elijah had a speedy answer, 1 Kings 18. 36, 37, 38, 39. Prayer hath wings to fly speedily to heaven, and to bring a speedy answer from heaven. See Dan. 9. 23.

2. Graciously, Exod. 22. 27. *When he crieth unto me, I will hear; for I am gracious.* As God is gracious to us many other wayes, so in special manner in hearing our prayers, and granting what we sue unto him for. A Prince is gracious, in granting the requests of his Suppliants; so is the Lord in hearing and granting our requests. Prayer of faith is crowned with favour from a gracious God.

3. Justly, so as to grant all that we sue unto him

him for, *Joh. 14. 13, 14. Mat. 21. 22.* He hath a full hand, and a large heart, and will fulfill the desires of them that fear him. The Creatures, the fuller they be, the more they communicate of their fulness; the *Sun*, that is full of light and heat, the *Stars* that are full of sweet influences, the *Sea* that is full of water, the *Clouds* that are full of Rain, the *Earth* that is full of good fruits, All these communicate of their fulness. God is a full one, and of his fulness we all receive: He is infinitely full, and therefore can and will fulfill all our desires, and give a full grant to all our requests that we put up to him. All the Creatures fulness is derivative and temporary, but his is of and from himself, and continues a full one to all eternity, and therefore more communicative than any, then all of them: So as our Prayers get a full answer from him, and a full grant of all we stand in need of.

4. Sometimes wonderfully, and to admiration. How wonderfully did the Lord hear *Joshua* in the *Sun* standing still? *Josh. 10. 12, 13, 14.* How wonderfully did he hear *Hezekiah's* desire, in its going back ten degrees? *2 Kings 20. 4.* How wonderfully did God answer *Elijah* in the two Captains with their fifties? *2 Kings 1. 9--12.* God is a wonder-working God, and sometimes to admiration he hears the prayers, and grants the desires of his Servants that seek to him. We are

not able to count what wonders have been done by Prayer : That wonder of the *Thundring Legions Prayer for Rain*, when the Emperour and his Army were in such distress, which was obtained by their Prayer, was a rare wonder indeed.

5. He hears them *constantly* ; there's no time that they come before him so as they ought, but he hears, and grants what they desire of him. Psal. 55. 17. *Evening and morning, and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice.* Let me come before him when I will, I shall get an answer. There are some Princes on earth that never deny their Suppliants, but are all upon the giving hand : That Emperour that said, *He never sent away any that came petitioning sad from him*, was such a Prince. Now if Princes on earth will do us, Oh how much more will God himself at all times grant that that we sue unto him for?

6. *Alwayes in time of need.* Heb. 4. 16. *Let us come boldly to the throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and finde grace to help in time of need.* God does all for us according to our need ; and when we need a grant of our Requests, we shall be sure to have it. Wise men will give where they see there's need ; much more the wise God. When we cannot tell how to be without a grant, when a grant comes from Heaven ; when we know



not what to do without it, then it is given, then the God of Heaven is liberal in his grants to us.

Quest. 3. *Why is the Lord a God hearing Prayer, and granting the desires of his Servants?*

Ans. 1. From himself. 2. From his Servants. 3. From the Duty of Prayer.

First, *From himself.* 1. He hath promised that he will hear and grant, Mat. 21. 22. Job. 16. 23. and what he promiseth he will perform: what he speaks with his mouth, he will fulfill with his hand, 1 King. 8. 24. Men often break their promises, and belie with their deeds what they utter in their words; but God cannot lie, Tit. 1. 2. and therefore what he speaks shall be done, He will not alter the thing that is gone out of his lips, Numb. 23. 19. if he say that he will hear and grant, he will make it good.

2. He hereby encourageth all flesh to come to him, Psal. 65. 2. They have many beggars at their doors that are bountiful givers: Those Courts of Princes are thronged with Suiters, where the Prince's ears are open to hear, and their hands open to give: So it is with Gods Doors, many there are that lye at them; and with his Court, multitudes of Suiters throng to it with their Petitions, when Gods ear is open to hear, & his hand open to give. They are encouraged to come, when he will not say them nay. It is observed, That that gracious Emperour Augustus

*gustus* had very many that made suit to him; how much more then will our gracious God have many that will make supplication to him?

3. He hereby *bindes us* the faster to himself in love and duty. *Every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts*, saith Solomon: and all look at themselves as much obliged to them that are bountifull in giving to them: but Oh how much more does God *oblige us* to him by those liberal grants that he makes to us! We are ready to say as *David* does, Psal. 116. 16. *Truely we are his servants, we are his servants*, and desire that none may shew our selves more faithful then we. That Traitor that *Augustus* was so kinde unto, not only in pardoning his Treason, but in giving him great things, and preferring him to highest Honour, look'd at himself as one that was deeply engaged and obliged to him, and proved the most faithful and loyal Subject to him of all other ever after; So does God *binde and tie us* to himself in duty and obedience, by his bountifull grants that he makes to us.

4. He hereby honours himself by having an open ear to hear, and an open hand to give and grant what we sue for. He is abundant in goodness, Exod. 34. 6. and this way shews it. It is observed of Solomon, that he gave the Queen of Sheba all that she asked, besides what he gave her of his royal bounty, 1 Kings 10. 13. and he hon-  
noured

nourred himself in so doing : How then does God honour himself in giving us all our desire, and what we ask ? there's no Royal bounty like his, he grants like a King, and like Himself : Other Kings have their Royal Grants, but none such as his are.

Secondly, *From his Servants.* 1. They expect his hearing of their Prayers, and a grant of their desires from him, and wait patiently upon him ; and this gets a grant. Psal. 40. 1. *I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined unto me and heard my cry.* There's nothing lost by patient waiting at the Courts of Kings, the desires of such are granted at last : much less is any thing lost by waiting upon the Lord, he will come with a full hand at last, and we shall have a full grant of what we sue for. The Husbandman waits for the precious fruits of the earth, and at length hath them ; so shall we by waiting have the precious blessings of Heaven brought in to us.

2. They believe that they shall be heard, and a Royal Grant bestowed upon them, and this prevails, Mat. 21. 22. Faith is a Key that opens all Locks : though Mercies should be locked up from us, yet this Key will make way for the bringing them forth to us : Knock, and it shall be opened to you, Mat. 7. 7. The door of Mercy may be fast barred and locked, but a knock by Faith will open it to us, and open all the Treasures of his bounty for us, that we may share in them.

3. They

3. They are *unwearied* in their desires, and that gets a grant: The woman of *Canaan* would not be discouraged, nor faint at so many denials and repulses, but went on in an *unwearied* course of suing and pleading, and this got a grant of what she asked, and what she would, *Mat* 15. 28. They that are not *weary* in their desires, may have *what they will*, God cannot tell how to deny such: If we be not *weary* of asking, God will not be *weary* of giving and granting. This crowns our Desires, and brings in all to us. We want not  *blessings*, so long as we want not *knees to bow to him*.

4. They *wrestle* for a grant of their desires, and so prevail, and become *Princes with God*, *Gen.* 32. 28. and *what* that wrestling was, we see *Hos.* 12. 3, 4. They that wrestled in the *Olympick Games*, if they got the Victory were crowned; much more shall they be crowned with a *Royal Grant* from Heaven, that wrestle and prevail with God.

5. They *ask according to his will*, 1 *Joh.* 5. 14, 15. and that prevails. Our Requests, when bounded within the compass of Gods will, obtain every thing at Gods hand. *Esthers* Petitions were bounded within the compass of the Kings will, *If it please the King*; and, *If I have found favour in the sight of the King, grant me this and that*, *Esth.* 5. 8. & 7. 3. and whatever she *thou* asked,

asked, he had a grant of it: So when we pray, and frame all our Petitions according to his will, he hears and grants all that we thus sue unto him for.

6. They ask earnestly and fervently, and that prevails, *Jam. 5. 16.* How earnest and fervent was *Elias*? and what an answer had he from Heaven? *1 Kings 18. 36, 37, 38.* Fervent Prayer, like fire, ascends to Heaven, and gets a grant there of all we ask, and of all that is the desire of our hearts: we need never doubt of the *speeding* of our Prayers, if offered up with this fire. This *Incense*, as it is *Psal. 141. 2.* will ascend to God and to his Throne, and finde acceptance.

Thirdly, *From the Duty of Prayer.* 1. It is a Sacrifice, *Heb. 13. 15. 1 Pet. 2. 5.* and the Sacrifices that were offered up under the Leviticall Law were accepted, and were of a sweet smelling savour unto God; and so is this of Prayer by *Jesus Christ*: His *Incense* perfumes our Prayers, *Rev. 8. 3.*

2. It is the lifting up of the Soul, *Psal. 25. 15.* and this holds our desire and delight, and earnest expectation and hope of having what is sued for; as *Deut. 24. 15.* the poor man is said to lift up his soul to his hire and wages, which is translated, He sets his heart upon it: so in Prayer we lift up our soul to God, to have those things we ask granted to us; and such a lifting up of the soul to God gets a grant from him.



3. It is compared to the *Incense*, *Psal. 141. 2.* *Let my prayer come before thee as the Incense:* now that was of a sweet savour, and ascended upward. So our Prayers are sweet to God, and ascend unto his Throne, are accepted, and get a grant.

4. It is compared to the *Mincah*, or *Offering*, that was boiled in the *Frying-pan*, *Psal. 141. 2.* which was boiled in oyle, and offered in the evening. Our Prayers being boiled in the oyle of the Spirit, and we praying in the holy Ghost, *Jude ver. 20.* these Prayers are accepted of God, and get a grant of all we ask through Jesus Christ.

*Use 1. for Information.* 1. We see what a broad difference there is between our God, and the Idols that others pray unto: Our God is a God hearing Prayer; but Idols cannot hear. *Baal's worshippers, 1 Kings 18. 26.* called from morning to noon, saying, *O Baal hear us:* but there was no voice, nor any that answered. So *Isa. 46. 12.* *Agab shall go to his sanctuary to pray, but shall not prevail.* Idols have ears, but they hear not, *Psal. 115. 6.* but our God that we pray to hath an hearing ear, and grants us all that we sue unto him for: never any had cause to say that he turns a deaf ear to them when they pray aright; his ears have alwayes been open to their Prayers, *1 Pet. 3. 12.*

2. We see what great encouragement we have to come to him, *Psal. 65. 2.* we may go when we will,

*will*, and be sure to speed; we may pray as *often as we will*, and have our desires granted: he will not turn away from us, but give us what we come for. Some Princes will *chide away* those that sue to them, as *Pharaoh* did the oppressed Israelites, *Exod.* 5. 17, 18. but our God that we sue unto never discourageth them that make suit and supplication to him, but gives them all the encouragement that may be, is found of them when they seek him, when they search for him with all their hearts, *Jer.* 29. 13. they shall never go away empty from his doors, but go laden with their laps full, with their hearts full, and all their desires like the *widows vessels*, *2 Kings* 4. 6. shall be filled full: we shall never say we have gone to God, but we have got something; there's a rich Treasury in Heaven, and we have carried away not a little from it.

3. We see what cause we have to *bleſs the Lord* for his *bounty* to us, in granting our Requests that we put up to him: There's no friend that is kinde to us in granting our desires, but we judge worthy of *thanks*, Oh how *thankeful* should we then be to God, that hears and grants what we seek unto him for? *Pſal.* 66. 20. It is the *Lords Tribute* that he looks for, and if we would not grudge to pay the King *his Tribute*, being a *commanded duty*, *Rom.* 13. 7. then we should cheerfully come off with the *Lords Tribute*, and pay

it in *holy Praises* to him. The truth is, we do but *bungle* at it here, and do it not workman-like; but we shall one day do it better, when we are joyned in this heavenly melody with that *innumerable company of Angels, and blessed Souls in glory*. But in the mean time we must be doing *something* this way for all his bounties to us, and if not so well as we would, yet we are to do it as well as we can, and long for the time when we shall perform it better.

4. We see that though we have but a few friends on earth, yet we have *One* in Heaven that will not fail us. There is a friend (Solomon sayes) that sticketh closer then a brother, Prov. 18. 24. and such an one is a rare jewel, and hardly to be found: but though he be not to be found on Earth, yet God is *such a friend*, and will hear and grant what we sue unto him for.

5. We see the truth of that in Psal. 73. 28. *It is good for me to draw near to God*: it must needs be so, considering *what a God he is* that we go unto, that *hears our Prayers, & grants us all that we ask of him*. We make account that it's good to go to a Father or Friend to make our wants known, that we may have a supply: Oh how good is it then to go to such a Father and Friend as God is?

6. We see what cause we have to *delight in the Lord*, that we may have the desires of our hearts granted

granted to us. Seeing he is so willing to grant, let us take the way that he prescribes for this, and that is by *delighting in him*, Psal. 37. 4. He that *delights* in his friend, may have any thing of him; how much more may they that *delight themselves in the Almighty*?

7. We see that we can never come off with love enough to him, who is a God hearing prayer, & granting our requests to us. We would think that man worthy of our love, that granted our desires in asking; but Oh what love should he have, that gives us all that we desire of him! Our love is but a little *Rivulet and Stream*, but he deserves a *full Sea*; our love is but a little *spark*, but he deserves that it *flame forth*; our love is but a *drop*, but he deserves that it should be a *full flowing Fountain* that's never dry.

8. We see how *unwearied* we should be in duty and obedience to him, that thus hears and grants: How loyal are Subjects to Royal Princes, when they come off bountifully to them? How dutiful and obedient are Servants to their liberal Masters? they are ready at hand to ride, run, go, do any thing for them: Oh how loyal should we then be to such a *bountiful King*, and how dutiful to such a *liberal Master* as God is, that gives us what we ask of him.

9. We see how we may be *followers of God*, by hearing the cries of poor *afflicted ones*, and granting

granting their desires : so does God to us, and so should we to them, *Ephes. 5. 1.* There are those that turn away from the cry of the poor, but they shall cry and not be heard. But seeing God hears us, if we would follow him we must hearken, and come off liberally to them, *Luke 6. 38.*

10. We see that none of our Prayers shall be lost that we put up to him, none of them shall miscarry. We may go to men with our Suits, and be put off, and turned away, and our Requests may be slighted, and made nothing of, but God dealeth not so with us when we come before him in Prayer, he hears and grants, and gives to all liberally, and upbraideh not, *Jam. 1. 5.* Some Princes have torn in pieces what their Petitioners have brought before them, as the Emperour *Valens* did to one of his noble Captains that had done him great Service, as *Theodoret* relates of him, *Lib. 5. Hist.* but our God never does so to his Suppliants, but they have a comfortable answer, and a liberal grant ; they go to a Throne of Grace, and finde grace to help in time of need : their Prayers come loaden with blessings, and they return home bringing their sheaves with them. *Naomi* complained, that she went out full, but returned empty : but we go out empty to him, and return full.

Use 2. for Terror to those that God will not hear,



hear, they are none of his; *they regard iniquity in their heart*, Psal. 66. 18. they are sinners that *delight in sinful wayes*, Joh. 9. 31. they are *loathsome* to him, blacker then Ravens in his sight, for he *hears them when they cry to him*.

Use 3. for *Humiliation* to the people of God, that *pray much*, and get no grant: surely there is some great cause, either they are not *earnest enough*, cry not *loud enough*, or else *slack their pace*, and are not *constant enough*, or have given God cause to be *angry with their prayers*, Psal. 80. 4. or have not been so *sincere* as they ought, or have had *unfixed hearts*, and been full of *wandering thoughts* that have marred the duty, or something or other hath stepped *between them and mercy*, and it is good for such to search *what is the cause*, and remove it, that God may not go out of his *wonted way*, but may shew himself a *God hearing prayer*.

Use 4. for *Exhortation*: 1. To honour God, and to give him this *noble Title* of his when we pray to him, and say *He is a God hearing prayer*. He delights to hear himself so spoken of; and we that finde the comfort of it, should delight to mention it to his praise. We honour an earthly King with his *Titles*, how much more then should we do it to this *glorious King*?

2. To bring our *Petitions* to him, he will not throw them away, nor tear them in pieces, nor cast

cast them at his feet in disdain, but will have them in *high esteem*, hang them upon the *file in Heaven*, remember them; give a grant to them: We may be encouraged to come to him, who is *a God hearing prayer*.

3. To be *humble*: for who are we that he should hear *our* Prayers? we deserve that when we *cry and shout*, he should not hear us, and that he should *cover himself with a cloud*, that our Prayers should not pass thorow. It is nothing in us that moves him to hear and grant, it is all of his Free-grace.

4. To hear those that *sue to us*, and give them *that* that they stand in need of, if it be in the power of our hand to do it. Why should we take *so much* from God, and return *so little* to his Saints? his *bounty* should provoke to *duty*, Prov. 3. 27, 28.

5. To *love him exceedingly* that hears our Prayers; what love is sufficient for him? If we could pour out our Souls into his bosome, all were *too little* for him. We think no love sufficient for a friend that gives us *what we ask*; Oh what love then is enough for him that hears our Prayers, and grants us *what we ask* of him?

6. To *rejoyce* that we go to such a God as both *can*, and *will* hear and grant. When *power* and *will* meet together, what should hinder us from

from rejoycing to go to such an one?

7. To *believe* when we pray that we *shall be heard*, for this *noble Title* calls us to awake our Faith when-ever we pray to him, *7am. 1. 5, 6, 7.*

8. To pray so *humblly, fervently, sincerely, constantly*, as that we may be sure to be heard, and a grant given out to us for what we ask, *Luke 18. 13. 7am. 5. 16. Psal. 17. 1. 1 Thess. 5. 17.*

*Use 5. for Consolation:* 1. That our labour shall not be lost.

2. That though men fail us, God will not.

*Verse 26. And the Lord said, If I finde in Sodom fifty righteous within the City, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.*

Doct. X. **T**hat the Lord sometimes gives unto his Servants the very same thing that they ask of him.

*Abraham desired this, That if there were fifty Righteous in Sodom, that the place might be spared; and God here grants him the very same thing, and sayes, If there be so many found there, he will spare all the place for their sakes. So he desired a Child, and God gave him Isaac, Gen. 15. 2, 3, 4. with 21. 2. So Isaac prayed for Rebekahs fruitfulness, and the Lord made her fruitful, Gen.*

*25. 21.*

25.21. So Jacob prayed for deliverance from Esau his Brother, and God gave him the same thing, Gen. 32.11. with 33.4. Hannah desires a man-child, and God gave her her Request, and granted the very thing she asked of him, 1 Sam. 1. 11, 20, 26, 27. So Jabez prayed, 1 Chron. 4. 10. and God granted him his petition in the kinde of it. We see the like in Asa, Jehosaphat, Hezekiah, David, Solomon, and many others, that had the same things granted that they desired.

Reasons. 1. From the Lord. 2. From his believing ones. 3. From the efficacy of Prayer.

First, From the Lord. 1. From his Power: there is nothing too hard for him, Gen. 18. 14. Job 42. I know (sayes Job) thou canst do every thing: and therefore though there may seem to be an impossibility in nature that the same thing should be granted, yet what cannot the Omnipotent One do? With him all things are possible, Jer. 32. 17, 27. It was the speech of an Indian amongst us to some of our Rulers, Command me some difficult thing, and it shall be done. And if so, what difficult thing is there that we at any time ask, that God cannot do for us?

2. From his Promise, Joh. 15. 7. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what you will, and it shall be done to you: the very same thing in kinde, as well as others; he will never say no in his deed, what he hath said in word, but fulfill

fulfill with his hand what he hath spoken with his mouth, 1 Kin. 8. 24. If he say, *We shall have what we will, the thing in kinde that we ask*, this King is not he that can deny it to us.

3. He hath ordained us to be fruitful, and that our fruit should remain, that whatsoever we ask, God may give it to us, Joh. 15. 16. It hath reference to the Apostles and Ministers principally, but yet reacheth *fruitful Christians* also.

4. From his *Love* that he bears to us, Job. 16. 26. 27. A friend that loves him that comes to see to him, will give him *the same thing* that he desires of him; how much more will our Friend and Father give us *the same thing we ask* of him, if it be good for us? Psal. 84. 11.

5. From his *Glory*, which is exalted in giving in kinde *the same thing* that we prayed for. Thus did *Hannah* lift up his Name and Praise, by giving her the *same mercy* that she asked of him, 1 Sam.

2. God loseth not in his glory, when we have what we ask of him: it leaves an impression of *thankfulness* upon our spirits.

6. From his *Greatness* in his bounty; for when he gives *the same thing we ask*, he commonly gives something more with it: He gave *Solomon wisdom and understanding* which he asked, but he gave him more, he added *Riches and Honour* to it, 1 Kin. 3. 9--13. He gave *Hannah a man-childe* that she asked, but something more



also was given, *the barren bare seven*, 1 Sam. 2. 5. So *Abraham desired an Heir*, and God gave him such a Son of whom Christ should come.

Secondly, *From the Believers*: 1. They desire that that is pleasing to God, 1 Kin. 3. 9, &c. and he cannot tell how to deny them that.

2. They are willing to return the blessing to God again, that he hath given at their desire, 1 Sam. 1. 27, 28. They improve the blessing well, and God cannot but give them such a blessing as he gives them an heart to improve for him.

3. They ask it conditionally, if the Lord see it good for them, and if it be his will, 1 Joh. 5. 14. and modest suiters are often speeders with men, much more with the Lord.

4. They are content to stay the Lord's time till the blessing come. *Isaac waited twenty years* for his wives fruitfulness, Gen. 25. 20, 26. and they that so wait, cannot be denied.

5. They believe the accomplishment of what God promiseth upon their Prayer, Gen. 15. 4, 5, 6. and Faith will carry all before it, it will get any thing at the hands of God.

6. They love the Lord for giving them what they asked of him, Psal. 116. 1. *Solomon loved the Lord* that gave him his desire, 1 Kin. 3. 3.

Thirdly, *From the Efficacy of Prayer*. 1. It obtains any thing at the hands of God, Mar. 7. 7. It makes men *Princes with God* to prevail for any thing, Gen. 32. 28.

2. It is the *Son's Ambassador* to God, that returns with good tidings, and does negotiate in Heaven for any thing for us.

3. It is that whereby we come near to God, *Jam. 4. 8.* and they that are near the King, may have in kind what they ask of him; much more may we that are near to God.

4. It is that that hath got great things in former times, as we see in the Prayers of *Moses, Ezra, Nehemiah, the good Prophets and Kings* that have obtained what they asked: and we go to the same God still, and repair to the same Fountain.

5. It comes into Gods holy Habitation, into Heaven, *2 Chron. 30. 27.* and there is all to be had that we would; there is a rich Treasury of all we desire.

6. It is that that is perfumed with Christs Intercession: *Rev. 8. 3.* His Incense, offered up with the prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar, prevails for any thing: and hence it is that he saies, *Joh. 14. 13, 14.* and he repeats it twice, *I will do it, I will do it.*

Use 1. for Information. 1. We see what great regard the Lord hath to the Prayers of his people put up to him; that he will sometimes give them the very same thing that they ask of him. Prayer of Faith is that that is very pleasing to him, *Cant. 2. 14.* and accepted of him, *1 Pet. 2. 5.* or

else he would never give us in kinde what we ask of him: it is musick and melody in his ears, or else he would not give us the same thing that we desire of him.

2. We see with what *alacrity* and *cheerfulness* we should come before the Lord in Prayer, for we are sure to speed, and sometimes to have the very thing that we seek unto him for: it is his but ask and have, and who then would not be encouraged to pray to him? The little Birds lift up their heads and eyes when they take in a drop or two into their mouths. Oh how cheerfully then should we lift up our eyes to heaven to the God of Heaven, that gives us not drops, but that thing in kinde that we ask of him, out of which we day drink abundantly, and be satisfied.

3. We see what wrong they do to themselves, that *restrain prayer* before God; Job 15. 4. they miss of many a fair blessing that they might carry home with them, yea in the things that they desire that they might enjoy: They spare to speak, and spare to speed; they might have what they would, did they bring their Petitions with them: They need be careful for nothing, could they in every thing make their requests known to God, Phil. 4. 6. Could men but pray, and love their Petitions with the Lord, they might have what they desire given in to them; but their restraint of prayer before him, causeth a restraint of blessings.

blessings that might be poured into their bosoms.

4. We see that God *minds* whatever it is that we pray to him for; for he gives sometimes *the very thing* that we ask of him. Princes may sometimes *take* their Suiters Petitions into their hands; but afterward *lay them aside*, and never look into them; but our God does not so, but he considers well what we speak in his ears, and grants *the very thing* we pray for. Prayer is of more reckoning with him, than to *lay aside* the Petitions of his Suppliants, and never regard what is contained in them, *Psal. 102. 17.*

5. We see how *willing* we should be to grant the desires in kinde that others make to us, if we be able, and have it by us; this is to be *like God himself*, for so does he to us, *Mat. 5. 42.* We fall short this way, but we have no such pattern to imitate as God is, and who would not be *like to God*? It is the glory of a man, the more he resembleth the God above; it is an honour to him that comes nearest to him in Workmanship, that is the rarest and choicest Artificer. Oh what is it then to come up to *that perfection* in some measure that is in God himself? It is a rare thing to be a follower of him.

6. We see that if God give us all we ask in kinde, then we are to suit our *thanks* according to the *benefits* bestowed upon us. If he hath given us *signal mercies*, so should our *praises* be:

we should render to him according to the benefits done to us. Herein Hezekiah failed, 2 Chron. 32. 24, 25. he was sick, and prayed unto the Lord, who spake to him, and gave him a sign, but Hezekiah rendered not according to the benefit done to him. We must take heed of such Ingratitude: Heathens could not bear unthankfulness; *Ingratum si dixeris, omnia dixerim*. Oh how then should God bear it! Our duty is to render parallel thanks to Gods benefits, *signal thanks for signal mercies*. It is a shame to be behinde in thanks to him, who is so much before-hand in bounty to us, in giving us the same things we ask of him.

7. We see that if God do not give us always what we ask, there is some great cause for it; either we have provoked him so that he will not, Deut. 3. 24, 25, 26. or else it is not good for us, Psal. 34. 10. & 84. 11. or else he hath some greater blessing to bestow upon us, as to give Moses entrance into the heavenly Canaan, though he might not go into earthly Canaan, or else he hath at least that to give which is equivalent, and that that may be every way as conducive to us, as if we had the thing it self: but ordinarily, except in these and such like cases, he gives us the very thing we ask of him.

8. We see what love we owe to him, for answering our desires in the kinde of them. We would love him that gave us our desires that we asked:



asked; what love then should he have! All the Springs of our love are too little for him. [*But we spake of that before, and therefore give but a touch of it here.*]

9. We see that if we *inlarge our desires*, and *ask much*, according to that in *Psal. 81. 10.* we may have those *large desires* granted, as well as if we asked but *little*, *Luke 11. 13.* *Jer. 33. 3.* It is all one with a Prince to *give much*, as well as *little*, and it is more to his honour to give *liberally*, then *sparingly*: Oh what honour is it then to him that ever comes off *liberally*, and like himself?

10. We see that if he give *the same things we ask*, he hath not bound his hands, but he can give *more*, even *that* that we have not asked: he did so to *Solomon*. And if we ask the *best things* as he did, we shall have *other things* cast in also, *Mat. 6. 33.* We go to one that hath *enough* by him, and that hath *will enough* to come off *royally*, and like a King.

*Use 2. for Terrour* to those that *ask not*: If they be full of these *earthly things*, they never desire *better things*, such shall get nothing in *Spirituals* and *Eternals* that ask them not, and then what will their *other things* do them good? *Mat. 16. 26.*

*Use 3. for Humiliation*, that we ask not *enough* in the *best kind*, for how rich might we be if we did?

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did? it would come in abundantly, and we should have *the thing*, how great soever, that we ask of him: in stead of *drops and buckets*, we might have *great Rivers* flowing in to us, yea the *Sea* itself; *God himself, Christ Jesus, the holy Spirit* might be ours; *Peace as a river, Righteousness as the waves of the Sea*, and *what not*, might become ours.

*Use 4. for Exhortation:* 1. To give glory to him that gives us the *same things* we ask of him, and something addes more; Oh how bountiful a God do we make our addressees to! his *hand is full*, and so should our *hearts and mouths* be of his praise.

2. To be full of duty and obedience to him. We owe him *ten thousand thousand*, and *thousand of thousands* more then ever we can here pay him.

3. To long for the time when as he overflows to us in bounty, so we shall to him in love and duty.

4. To pray without ceasing; we shall be no losers by it, we shall have *the thing we ask*.

5. To be liberal our selves: we have an example worthy our imitation.

6. To be little in our own eyes: for who are we that he should thus condescend to us?

Verse

Verse 26. And the Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the City, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.

Doct. XI. **T**hat the Lord is so full of love to his Righteous ones, that he will spare a multitude of wicked ones for their sakes.

Sodom was a City that had many in it, and they were sinners above the ordinary sort, but if there had been fifty Righteous within the City, he would have spared all the place for their sakes.

Reasons. 1. From the Lord. 2. From his Righteous ones.

First, From the Lord. 1. He is a Merciful God; he Proclaimed his Name so of old, Exod. 34. The Lord, The Lord God, merciful: and such a God as delighteth in mercy, Mic. 7. 18. and therefore though such sinners and righteous ones deserve no such thing as mercy, yet it is meet that he should have his delight. Malefactors deserve nothing but punishment, but if a Prince delight in mercy, and will spare them, who hath any thing to say against it, but that he may take his delight? so here.

2. He hath promised, that for the sake of his Righteous ones he will deliver great places. Job 22. 30. He will deliver the Island of the innocent; and his Promises are sure words. If a King say that

that he will do a thing, it shall be done, it is irrevocable, he will not call back his word; how much more will the Lord make good his promises, they are all faithful words, and stand fast for ever.

3. He hath said that he could do nothing so long as any Righteous ones have been in wicked places, his hands are as it were bound and tied, Gen. 19. 22. and therefore he will do much for their sakes: He knows not how to smite while they are there. If the place be never so bad, it must be spared till they be gone. If he bury any Jewels, it shall not be among such dunghill sinners, they shall lye down in their graves with honour.

4. He orders it in his Providence, that when he hath any evil to bring upon a place, he takes away his Righteous ones before that evil come, Isa. 57. 1. Austin was taken away, before the City where he lived was taken by the Goths and Vandals. Pareus was removed by death, before Heidelberg was surprized by Spinola and his Soldiers. Mr. Whately of Banbury was translated to a better place, before the Town was taken in the late Wars: And all these were removed a little before such judgements came. The Corn is gathered into the barn, before the Swine are sent into the field; so the godly are taken away, before any remarkable judgement come, which shews

shows how favourable the Lord is to his Servants, and that great and sinful places are spared while they are there with them.

9. He looks at his Righteous as such as the world is not worthy of; Heb. 11. 38. for they keep off judgement from the world, though they be so vilely and unworthily used in the world. They are the props and pillars of the world, under God; if they were all gathered in, the world would soon be burned into ashes, and would be on a flaming fire. They are they that keep up the whole fabrick of the Earth, and under God keep it from ruine and dissolution.

6. He abhors and abominates the workers of iniquity, and therefore if he spare them, and destroy them not, it is for the sakes of the Righteous that are among them: it is not for any good will that he bears to the wicked, he would soon make an end of them, if there were not some amongst them that his Soul takes pleasure in. Shells that are good for nothing but to be cast away, are regarded for the Pearls that are in them: So here.

Secondly, *From his Righteous ones.* 1. They pray for the places they live in, that the Lord would be pleased to keep off judgements, and continue mercies to them; and these Prayers of theirs prevail: God cannot tell how to deny the fruits that they present before him; Lot for Zoar, Gen. 19. 20, 21.

Their



Their Prayers are so *delightful to him*, Prov. 15.8. Cant. 2. 14. that even places devoted to destruction shall be spared for their sakes: the smoke of the incense of their Prayers ascends to God and to his Throne, and so prevails, that Gods anger cannot so smoke against those places, as otherwise it would certainly do, were it not that God had such regard to the Prayers of his Righteous ones in their behalf.

2. They are vexed with their filthy conversation, and tormented day by day with their unlawful deeds, 2 Pet. 2.7,8. and this affliction of their souls that they suffer among such wicked ones, God hath special regard unto, and for the sake of such mourners will spare those places while they continue among them.

3. They by their presence keep off the stroke of Gods vengeance. Great is the power of the very company of godly ones to bear off, and shield off a judgement, when it is ready to fall upon a wicked place. Evil men do not think so, but they shall know it when the righteous are removed from them, Isa. 57.1.

4. They are very tender of his Name, and therefore he will so tender them, that for their sakes he will do great things, yea for a sinning people. How tender was Lot of the glory of God, that could not endure to hear and see what he did, without vexing his righteous soul from day to day?

day? and did not God accept him for the sparing of Zoar?

5. They keep his Commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight; and therefore can prevail with him for any thing, 1 Joh. 3. 22. even for the sparing of a very wicked place and people. They that please Princes may have any thing of them that they desire; how much more they that do those things that are pleasing to the Lord?

6. They delight themselves in the Lord, and therefore he will give them the desires of their hearts, Psal. 37. 4. whatever it is that they desire, though it be in behalf of a wicked place and people, yet even that desire shall be granted to them. Such a place and people shall be spared for their sakes.

7. They are a people near unto him, Psal. 148. 14. and therefore he will do much for them.

Use I. for Information. 1. We see what honour God puts upon his Righteous ones, that will for their sakes spare wicked places, and the worst of people. Great is the respect that God bears to them, that for their sakes will not destroy those that are devoted to ruine and destruction. It is an honour to finde acceptance with God our selves, but to be so much in favour with him that others, of the worst sort, should fare the better for our sakes, this is great grace and favour, and high ho-

now put upon us. Well may it be said, *He exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all his Saints*, Psal. 148. 14.

2. We see how glad evil men may be that they have any Righteous ones living amongst them, for it is for their sakes that they are spared: were they but once removed from them, which they hate and persecute, they should quickly see what God would do with them, and what wrath would break out against them; but Righteous ones stay his hand from striking, and hide his arm from smiting, keep back judgements; and he is so gracious, that he sayes *He will spare such wicked ones for their sakes*. Such as are wicked sinners may think it well for them, that they have some Righteous ones among them, to stand in the gap, and make up the hedge for them, or else their destruction would overtake and overwhelm them speedily.

3. We see how out of measure sinful they be, that are enemies to them, and do them all the despite they can in word and deed, that are such friends to them, that for their sakes God spares them, and will not for the present destroy them, while they are with them that are the Lords righteous ones. Oh the unkindness and deep ingratitude that is in such men! and how they will answer it another day, it belongs to them seriously to consider of. See Psal. 109. 4, 5.

4. We

4. We see that they must needs rush into great danger that malign and hate the Righteous, and requite evil for good to them, Psal. 109. 5, 6. Satan stands at the right hand of such: and it is worthy to be had in memory that Solomon speaks, He that rewardeth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house, Prov. 17. 19. Oh that such would consider of this, that forget God, and what their duty is to Righteous ones. It's bad to requite evil for evil, and forbidden Rom. 12. 17. but to requite evil for good, this is that that argues great wickedness, and will bring the severest wrath with it. But many men are too willing to undo themselves and theirs, that go this way.

5. We see how thankful the Lords Righteous ones should be to him, for whose sakes he is willing to spare a wicked people. Were it that they had but so much mercy shewed to them to be spared themselves, it would be that that they have cause for ever to be thankful for; but that the Lord should extend this further mercy to them, that others, that are the worst of men, should be spared for their sakes, this calls for greatest thanks. See Gen. 19. 19, 20, 21.

6. We see what great delight we should have in the Lord, what so delighteth in his Righteous ones, that for their sakes he will spare the worst of places, and the worst of men. We would delight in a friend that so delighteth in us, as to spare  
others

others for our sakes: Oh how then should we delight in the Lord? *Psal. 37. 4.*

7. We see that surely God will not cast away his own people, that will for their sakes spare the worst of men. They may think so in time of temptation, as some have, *Psal. 31. 22. Lam. 3. 18. Jonah 2. 4.* but they need not fear it, for he that hath them in such esteem, that others fare the better for their sakes, how can it then be that he should so forsake them, as to cast them utterly out of his sight?

8. We see that the prayers of the Righteous that they put up for others, are not lost, for they keep off judgements, even from the wicked themselves, how bad soever they be. There's great energie and efficacy in the prayers of Righteous ones, *1am. 5. 16.* [But I would but give a touch of this, we have occasion often to make mention of it.]

9. We see what love Righteous ones should come off with to the Lord, that for their sakes will spare a multitude of the worst of men. We cannot think what love we owe him: if our hearts were as full of it as the Sea is of water, it were far too little for him. The love of Angels is too scant for him, how much more ours, which is but a mite to their talents, a drop to their rivers?

10. We see what longings we should have to enjoy him for ever, that hath such respect to us  
here,



here, that for our Prayers and Presence the worst of men shall escape that destruction, that they could not otherwise look for. Oh who would not be with him that is so full of love and sweetness to us here? His steps, as they drop fatness here, so they will pour out love and sweetness there.

Use 2. for Terror to those that hate the Righteous that live with them, and are never well but when they are raging at them; how would such do if they were all gone? All mischief upon mischief would surely come upon them: they should see that to their cost the Righteous were taken away from them.

Use 3. for Humiliation to those that say God is gone utterly from them, and hath forsaken them: Say not so, for the Righteous please God so that they prevail for others; and if so, God will not utterly cast them off.

Use 4. for Exhortation: 1. To honour the Lord that thus honours us, as for our sakes to spare even wicked men. Princes are exalted when they spare grievous Malefactors for their sakes that sue to them: how much more should the Lord be exalted by us, that does thus of his grace for our sakes?

2. To do any thing for his sake that he calls for from us, that does so much for our sakes to others. The most difficult work we should come

off with for his sake, *Heb. 11. 8, 17, 35, 36, 37.*

3. To give up our selves and all we are and have to him: Does he for our sakes spare wicked places? then let us be wholly his, *1 Cor. 6. 19, 20.*

4. To love him heartily, that out of love to us does not onely spare us, but others also for our sakes, *Mat. 22. 37.*

5. To be without fear of the hatred of wicked men, for the mischief of it for rewarding evil for good will fall upon their own pates.

6. To long for everlasting enjoyment of him. If he so favour us here while we are among evil men, what will he do when we come in Heaven?

Use 5. for Consolation: 1. That he will not cast away any Righteous ones alwayes, as *Psal. 77. 7, 8, 9.*

2. That if he esteem them so here, much more in glory.

Verse 27. *And Abraham answered, and said, Behold, now, I have taken upon me speak unto the Lord which am but dust and ashes.*

**I**N these words we have *Abrahams* second humble Address to the Lord, in further interceding to him in behalf of *Sodom*; where in he labours to gain something more of the Lord, that though there were not so many as fifty Righteous

Doct. 12. are but dust and ashes.

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Righteous Within the City, yet there might be five and forty; and therefore intreats that he would not destroy the place for lack of five.

There are fundry Notes to be observed hence,

Doct. XII. **F**rom the Style and Title that he gives to himself, is this, That men, yea the best of Believers, are but dust and ashes.

Job 17. 14. I have said to Corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister. Eccles. 12. 7. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was.

Quest. 1. In what respects are man, yea the best and greatest of them, said to be dust and ashes?

Ans. 1. In regard of the first Original of mans body, Gen. 3. 19. Hence Elibu sayes, Job 33. 6. I am formed, or (as the Hebrew hath it) I am cut out of the clay. Our bodies are pieces of Clay, and we out of the earth are fashioned and formed, and cut out into that form that God hath put upon us: we sprung from the earth; and thence we had our first beginning. All of us are *Terra filii*; dust is the matter that our bodies are made of, Gen. 2. 7.

2. In regard of our last resolution: Gen. 3. 19. Unto dust thou shalt return. Our bodies must go to dust, though they have been never so curiously fashioned, and never so much imbroidery

bestowed upon them, as it is *Psal. 130. 15.* yet to dust all the fairest beauty must go, and be covered with earth, and assimilated to that out of which it was first taken. Hence the bodies of the greatest Princes are laid in the dust, and are said to go to their earth, *Psal. 146. 3. 4.* and of all it is said, *Eccles. 12. 7.* The dust shall return to the earth as it was.

3. In regard of our vileness: dust and ashes are vile things, so are we vile; Job styles himself so; *Job 40. 4.* Behold, I am vile; not onely by reason of sin, which is the worst vileness, but in regard of the meanness and baseness of our Nature that we carry about with us. Hence we are compared to the vilest things, *Job 25. 6.* Man that is a worm, and the son of man that is a worm: that one word signifies an Earth-worm, and the other a Belly-worm: both which are vile, and hold out our vileness to us.

4. In regard of the contemptibleness of our estate: dust and ashes are contemptible things, every one treads upon them; so contemptible are we, unworthy to be looked upon, unworthy to be trod upon by the Lord, unworthy to come where he is, unworthy of the least of his mercies, *Gen. 32. 10.* even such as may be justly ashamed, and blush to lift up our faces unto him, *Ezra 9. 6.* *Jer. 3. 25.* *Dan. 9. 7. 8.*

5. In regard of the foulness of our estate:

dust

dust and ashes are foul things, they leave a kinde of soil and filth behinde them; so is our state by Nature, we are all defiled as an unclean person or thing, and all our righteousnesses as filthy rags, Isa. 64. 6. Hence the Psalmist, and the Apostle after him, describing the condition of natural men, sayes, *They are altogether become filthy; stinking*, as it is in the Hebrew, Psal. 14. 3. there is a *dusty* soil upon us all.

6. In regard of our unprofitableness: dust and ashes are little worth, unprofitable things; such are we, and we must say so, Luke 17. 10. Say, (sayes Christ) *we are unprofitable servants*. Hence the Apostle describing the condition of all natural men, sayes, *They are altogether become unprofitable*, Rom. 3. 12. good for as little as the dust under our feet: *Unprofitable unto God*, Job 22. 2. & 35. 7. *unprofitable to other men*; how little good do we to them? we may be ashamed of it that we do so little: *unprofitable to our selves*; we can *destroy our selves*, Hos. 13. 9. but any way to do good to our selves, it is not in our power by nature to do it.

7. In regard of our fickleness and inconstancy: dust and ashes are blown away with every wind; so are we by nature driven away by every wind of doctrine, Eph. 4. 14. and with every puff of wind of favour and applause of men, as Haman was; and with every wind of Satans temptations: so



that we are as dust and ashes hurled up in the air, and scattered with all winds that blow against us.

8. In regard of the sudden change of our estate: *dust* and *ashes* are suddenly removed from the place they were in; so is man suddenly removed from one state to another, from prosperity to adversity, from health to sickness, from life to death: how many sudden changes do we see made, as if like *dust* and *ashes* men were suddenly hurled out of their place and state? who but Haman one day with the King, and within a little after hanged upon the gallows, Esth. 7. 10. Such vicissitudes and changes there are on a sudden, as if the dust and ashes flew up into the air all on the sudden with a fierce wind.

9. In regard of the ignominiousness of our estate: To be laid in the dust, is to be ignominious, Psal. 7. 5. *Let him lay my honour in the dust*; that is, *Let me become most ignominious*. Our style therefore being *dust* and *ashes*, it holds out this, That our condition is, while we are here, to be laid low: hence we are sometimes laid as low as the dust by affliction, and are said to put our mouths in the dust, Lam. 3. 29. How low was Job brought? The greatest man in the East, was brought to sit in the dust, yea ignominiously to scrape himself upon the dunghill.

10. We are dust and ashes in regard of the  
feebleness

*feebleness and weakness* of our condition. *Dust and ashes* have no power to resist any wind that blows: and truly such *feeble things* we are, unable to resist any wind of *temptation*, any tempest of *persecution*. How many fall away in these times? *Alexander, Judas, Demas*, yea all forsook Paul he saith, 2 Tim. 1. 15. & 4. 16. Puffs of *persecution* and *favour*, puffs of *wealth* and *honour*, which are but as *wind*, these feeble men have no power to resist, but are carried away with them, as *dust before the wind*, Luke 8. 13. 2 Tim. 4. 10, 14.

*Use 1. for Information.* 1. We see how little in our own eyes we should all be, for when we look biggest, and have the most *lofty eyes*, and have the most *goodly thoughts* of our selves, we should then reflect upon our selves, and give our selves a *check and curb*, and say, *We are but dust and ashes*, and *why should such dust so exalt it self?* It well becomes poor *dust and ashes* to be *humble*, and lay it self very low: the richest and most honourable *dust* hath done so, *Psal. 131. 1, 2.* and the wisest of the dusty sons of men have done so, *Prov. 30. 2.* and so should we.

2. We see how many *serious thoughts* we are to have of our *mortality*, and of our *returning to the dust*, for we are *dust and ashes*, and ere long must be all covered with *dust*. Princes must *return to their dust*, *Psal. 146. 3, 4.* Prophets to

their dust, Zech. 1. 5. the Wisest men to their dust; Solomon slept with his fathers, 1 King. 11. 43. the Holiest men to their dust, 1 King. 2. 10. David slept with his fathers; the Strongest return to their dust, as Samson, Judg. 16. 31. and so it must be with us all, and this we had all need seriously to think of, and to prepare our selves daily for, Job 14. 14.

3. We see how *weaned* we should be from all the greatest men in the world what they can do for us, for they are but *gilded dust*, they may think to raise us up, but in the day of their death their hands are bound, and their goodly thoughts perish, Psal. 146. 4. We are therefore to enjoy their favour *weanedly*, for when dust is laid in the dust, what can that dust do for us?

4. We see that in a way of *well-doing* we need not fear any man, how great soever he is, for he is but *dust and ashes*; and how weak is *dust and ashes* before the wind? if the wind of Gods displeasure do blow, how easily is such *dust* scattered, and brought to nothing? Luke 12. 4. Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, Herod, were great Persecutors, but they were all *dust*: so are all those that now rage against Gods people; and why should we fear them that are but *dust and ashes*? Isa. 51. 12.

5. We see that there is no *trust* to be put in Princes, nor in any son of man; for he is as soon  
taken

taken away as dust before the wind, Psal. 146. 3, 4. See how God curseth such, Jer. 17. 5. and how he pronounceth them blessed that trust in him, ver. 7, 8. Who in his right minde would trust to dust and ashes, which any blast will take away? Man is dust, and as easily carried away as the dust before the wind: what folly then like this, to trust in him? It is as if a man should scrape a heap of dust together, and there rest himself, and the next puff of wind should presently blow it all away.

6. We see what longings we should have for heaven, for we are dust here, and dwell in dusty houses and tabernacles, so the Greek word signifies, 2 Cor. 5. 1. that house in heaven is made of better materials then dust, that building is worth the dwelling in. Here we dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, Job 4. 19. but that's a stately house indeed, to be earnestly desired after.

7. We see how humble we should be in all our holy addresses to God: so was Abraham here, I am, sayes he, but dust and ashes. [But of that in the next Point.]

8. We see that when our dearest ones leave us, and are sometimes suddenly taken from us, we may not wonder at it, nor be too much troubled, for they are but dust and ashes, 1 Thess. 4. 13, 14.

9. We see how admirable a workman God is, that out of the dust hath formed such a beautiful  
work

*work as Man is: As he is wonderful in counsel, so he is excellent in working, Isa. 28. 29. No works are like his, Psal. 86. 8. out of such matter to make such work, shews the workman what he is.*

10. We see what a dreadful thing it is for a man to strive with his Maker: How should dust and ashes resist the Omnipotent One? Isa. 45. 9. yet thus do they that strive against his Saints, and shall perish in so doing, Isa. 41. 11.

Use 2. for Terror to those that are Enemies to God: How dare dust and ashes thus rebel against him, that can as easily blow them all away, as the wind drives the dust away?

Use 3. for Humiliation to those that are afraid of men more then God, Isa. 51. 7, 8, 12.

Use 4. for Exhortation: 1. To look at our selves as we are, and lye low before God when he afflicts, 1 Pet. 5. 6.

2. To be very serious about our mortality, and pray, Psal. 90. 12.

3. To lay the death of others to heart, Eccles. 7. 2. Isa. 57. 1.

4. To long to be there, where dust shall not cleave to us, and we dwell in a better house.

5. To breathe after the Resurrection, 1 Cor. 15. 44. Phil. 3. 2.

6. To hold up these dusty houses as long as we can.

7. To beware of disputing, Rom. 9. 20.

8. To come awfully before God in holy duties.

Verse



Verse 27. — *which am but dust and ashes.*

Doct. XIII. **T**Hat it becomes believing Suppliants to be very humble, and conscious of their own vileness, when they pray before the Lord.

So does Abraham here abase himself, and lay himself low before the Lord in praying to him.

Thus the woman of Canaan did, she fell at his feet, Mark 7. 25. Thus Solomon did, he kneeled upon his knees, 1 Kin. 8. 54. Thus humble was David, in offering to the building of the Temple, 1 Chro. 29. 14, 16. *Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort?* See also 2 Sam. 7. 18, 19. how humble he is in praying, after God had promised that Solomon should build him an house, with many other promises that by Nathan he made to him and his people; *Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord God: but thou hast spoken also of thy servants house for a great while to come, and is this the manner of man, O Lord God?* Humility, as it becomes us at all times, and therefore we are commanded to be clothed with it, 1 Pet. 5. 5. so then more especially it becomes us, when we are to pray to him.

For opening of which Point, let me shew,

1. *Wherein*

1. *Wherein* we are to express *Humility* in Prayer to him. 2. *Why*. 3. The *Uses*.

Quest. 1. *Wherein* are we to express *humility*?

Ans. 1. In coming with *awful* reverence before him, thinking reverently of *his Reverend Name*, Psal. 111. 9. and behaving our selves reverently in *his presence*, Psal. 89. 7. Men reverence the Thrones of Princes, and behave themselves with great reverence before them when they sue to them: so are we to do when we are to sue to the Lord.

2. In *humble speeches* to him of our own *vileness*. So *Abraham* did here; so *Job* did, *Job* 40. 4. Behold, (sayes he) *I am vile*. So *Jacob* did, *Gen.* 32. 10. *I am less then the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth that thou hast shewn to thy servant, &c.* Humble speeches to great men do become us; how much more do they when we come before the great God?

3. In *taking shame* to our selves: Thus did *Ezra*, *Ezr.* 9. 6. *I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee my God.* Thus did *Daniel*, *Dan.* 9. 7, 8. *O Lord, Righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, &c.* So they in *Jer.* 3. 25. *We lye down in our shame, and our confusion covereth us, because we have sinned against thee.* If ever an *holy blush* becomes us, then much more when we pray to him.

4. In *humble gestures*, kneeling upon our knees

as Subjects to our Prince: thus did Solomon, 1 King. 8. 54. or standing, as Servants to our Master, Luke 11. 25. or smiting upon our breasts, and casting down our eyes, Luke 18. 13. or falling upon our faces, or any bodily gesture expressing the humility of our spirits. We would count our selves unworthy to come Into the Prefence of a King on earth, if we did not use humble gestures before him: Oh how much more then should we, when we use them not when we come before the Lord?

5. In *humble behaviour* in our Petitions to him in a beseeching way: The Evangelist sayes, that the woman of Canaan besought Christ that he would cast the devil out of her daughter: Thus Abraham besought the Lord for Sodom: So the Text. Thus Jacob humbly prayed for deliverance from Esau in a beseeching way, Gen. 32. 11, 12. So Daniel, Dan. 9. 19. O Lord hear, O Lord forgive, O Lord consider and do, defer not for thine own sake, O my God. They that sue to Princes are full of intreaties, much more should we, when we come before the Lord.

6. In being afraid that we should then provoke him to anger when we pray to him. Gen. 18. 30, 32. Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: so Gideon useth the same expression, Judg. 6. 39. [But of this I shall enlarge, when I come to speak of those words of Abraham.]

7. In

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Quest. 1. *Wherein* are we to express *humility*?

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7. In self-loathing, and self-abhorrency, Ezek. 36.31. Job 42.6. This argues an humble heart, when we can loath our selves, and abhorre our selves by provoking of him.

Quest. 2. *Why are we thus to be humble in our addresses to him?*

Ans. 1. From the Lord. 2. From our selves. 3. From the Petitions we make to him.

First, *From the Lord.* 1. He is a great God, and a great King above all gods, Psa. 47.2. & 95.3. Mal. 1.14. I am a great King, saith the Lord of Hosts: and does not humility then well become them, that come before such a great One as he is?

2. He is our Maker, Psa. 95.6,7. and should we not be humble before our Maker? He made us at first, and hath made us again, when we had defaced his first workmanship, 2 Cor. 5.15. and the second gift is greater then the first. *In primo opere me mihi dedit, in secundo se.* sayes Bernard, and such a Makers love is to be humbly adored.

3. He humbled Himself exceedingly to us, Psa. 113.5 — 9. and should not we learn humility of him? Should the King be humble, and the Subjects proud?

4. He is so glorious, that the Angels cover their faces and feet before him, Isa. 6.2. and if those mighty ones, those great Courtiers be so humble, how humble should we be, that are vile dust and ashes?

5. He

5. He delights in humble ones, looks with an eye of favour to such, Isa. 66. 2. and should not this humble us in his sight? Humble suiters with men are most in favor, much more with the Lord.

6. He hears the desires of the humble, Psa. 10. 17. and therefore we may well think it behoves us to be humble.

7. He dwells with such, Isa. 57. 15. he is familiar with them; and will not leave them, as men forsake not their dwellings.

8. He will save such, Job 22. 29. with a temporal and eternal salvation.

Secondly, From our selves. 1. We are low in our Original, Gen. 3. 19. & 2. 7. and it's good to think of that to abase us, and lay us low before him.

2. We are low in our condition whither we are to go, Eccles. 12. 7. Job 25. 6. and can we look at proud dust without blushing?

3. We are viler then the vilest of the creatures by reason of sin, Job 40. 4.

4. We are beggars, and humility well becomes such, 1 Chron. 29. 14, 16. Mat. 5. 3.

5. We are his suppliants, Zeph. 3. 10. and humility well becomes such.

6. We are debtors, and they sue humbly: so should we, Mat. 6. 11.

Thirdly, From the Petitions themselves: 1. They are for great things, and therefore it becomes us to be humble in suing for such great things.

things. *A portion in Christ, Inheritance in Heaven, Pardon of sin, Peace of Conscience, Fellowship with God, &c.* these are great things.

2. They are for good things, *Mats. 7. 11.* and we should be humble in asking such things. *H* How good is the Favour of God, and Assurance of his Love, Justification? &c.

3. They are for rare things, that but a few partake of: we pray for Salvation, and that's a rare thing, there are few saved, *Mats. 7. 14.*

4. They are wonderful things that we ask, *1 Cor. 13. 3.* and such things are to be humbly prayed for.

5. They are precious things that we ask, *Christ, the holy Spirit, Grace, Glory.* these are very precious things, and therefore we are to ask them humbly.

6. They are whatsoever we will: that we may have a grant of, *Matth. 21. 22. Joh. 15. 7.* and therefore it well becomes us to ask such things in an humble manner.

Use 1. for Information. 1. We see that they that are of a proud spirit when they come to pray before the Lord, cannot expect that their Prayers should be accepted; for humility is that that God looks for, and that which well becomes us when we pray to him. Cloth of Gold does not better become a Prince, then humility does a Petitioner before the Lord. Humble suiters are the speeders, *Luke 18. 13, 14.* Pride is a Rag of the

the old man, and it is not comely to be seen in rags before such a King as the Lord is.

2. We see a reason why Prayer is called *Incense*, Psal. 141. 2. Mal. 1. 11. The Incense was to be beaten small, Exod. 30. 36. and by the beating of it very small, was shadowed out the *humility* and *contrition* of our hearts in Prayer.

3. We see that *Confession of sin* is one of the chief ingredients that Prayer is to consist of, for therein we chiefly humble our selves in coming before the Lord in Prayer, Lev. 20. 40, 41, 42. Solomon speaks much of it in his Prayer, 1 Kin. 8. and we cannot be too serious in it.

4. We see that Popish Prayers according to the number of their *Beads*, which they do so glory in, are of no account with God, because they *trust in them*, and come not from the *humility* of their hearts; for *He resisteth the proud, but gives grace to the humble*, 1 Pet. 5. 5. The more *humble* we be when we pray, the more *acceptance* we may expect from him, Psal. 10. 17.

5. We see that *without faith* there's no putting up an humble Prayer. *Abraham's* faith made him pray so *humbly*: So that woman of *Canaans* faith was that that *humbled* her heart in Prayer, that she *fell at Christs feet*. It was the *Centurions* faith that made him confess that he was not worthy that *Christ should come under his Roof*, and that he was not worthy to come to him, Luke

7. 6, 7. Faith is an *humbling grace*, and the more of it we bring with us in Prayer, the more *humility* decks that Prayer.

6. We see a reason of that in Psal. 51. 17. *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, &c.* and that in Psal. 34. 18. *The Lord is nigh to them that are of a broken heart*: It must needs be so, for they pray in humility of heart before him.

7. We see that they that are truly godly cannot but be *humble* in Prayer, it is their property, and they look at it as their *duty* so to be.

8. We see that they that *flant* it in their Prayers with quaint words, and curious expressions, they know not what *faith* and *godliness* mean: it's ill in Preaching so to do, 1 Cor. 2. 1, 2, 4. but much worse in Prayer. Eloquent Beggars are not regarded by men, much less *flanting Beggars* before the Lord.

Use 2. for Reproof: 1. Of those that use such gestures in Prayer, as favour not of *humility* and *reverence*, *sitting*, *sleeping*, *gazing upon vain objects*, some have much to answer for the two latter: both which argue *high contempt of God*, and (being frequent) *great profaneness of heart*.

2. Against those that *confess not* their own *vileness* and *unworthiness*, nor so *abase themselves* as *humble Suppliants* ought.

Use 3. for Exhortation, To pray in *humility*.

Motives.



*Motives.*

1. Such are *justified ones*, and thereby exalted, *Luke 18.13,14.*
2. Such gather upon God, and gain upon him, *Gen.18. from 24, to 33. as Abraham.*
3. Such shall have *difficult things* done for them, *Mark 9.24.—29.*
4. Such shall be *saved out of all their troubles*, *Psal.34.6.*
5. Such are the *friends of God*, *Jam.2.23.*

*Helps.*

- 1 Be apprehensive of Gods greatness.
  - 2 Grow in *faith*: nothing humbleth us more then it.
  - 3 Look to the multitude of our debts.
  - 4 Be *poor in Spirit*: such pray humbly.
  - 5 Be *sensible* of the Lords mercy: we are never more *humble*, then when most apprehensive of that.
  - 6 Gather what we can against our selves daily.
- Use 4. for *Examination*, whether we pray in humility.

*Marks.*

- 1 Humility is *free and full in confessing* particular sins, *1 Chron.21.17.*
- 2 It *aggravates sin*, *Ezra 9.6,7,13.*
- 3 It *changeth all sorts* with sin, *Dan.9.7,8,10,11.*
- 4 It *bears hard words* (*Matth.15.27.*) from others.

5 It layes load upon our selves, Psal. 73. 22.

6 It makes us *silent* before the Lord, Job 40.

4, 5.

7 It makes us loath and abhorre our selves,  
Ezek. 36. 31. Job 42. 6.

Verse 27. — *Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes.*

Doct. XIV. **T**Hat Believers are, and may be bold with the Lord in praying.

Thus was *Abraham* bold with God here; *Behold, (sayes he) I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, &c.*

For opening of which, let me shew,

1. *Wherein* this boldness does consist. 2. *Why* they may be so bold with the Lord in praying to him. 3. *The Uses.*

Quest. 1. *Wherein* does this boldness consist?

A. 1. In speaking freely all that we have to say to him: So the Greek word *παρρησια* holds out, Heb. 4. 16. it properly signifies *A liberty to speak all that we can speak, or A freedom to speak all our minds.* Men may sometimes cut us off, and make us break off before we have spoken all we would, and bid us forbear, as 2 Chron. 25. 16. *Amaziah* did to the Prophet: but the Lord would have us so bold with him, as to speak all

we

we have to say in his ears; he will not interrupt us, or break off our speech, but give us *liberty* to speak all our minde to him. *That's the first.*

2. It consists in *an humble taking upon us to speak* in his Presence; so did *Abraham* here; sayes he, *I have taken upon me, though but dust and ashes, to speak to the Lord*; that is, I have been *bold* to speak to him, or I have *freely begun* to speak to him, as the Hebrew word is sometimes taken.

3. It consists in *seeking to gather and gain upon God* in our requests that we put up to him. Thus *bold* was *Abraham* here, he seeks to *gain* upon God in his addressees to him; as we shall shew more hereafter, if the Lord will.

4. It consists in *coming frequently*, and as often as may be into his Presence. They that go often into the Kings Presence are bold with him, as Favourites use to be: so they that are often with the Lord are *bold* with him. So were *Enoch* and *Noah*, that had their *constant walks* with God, Gen. 5. 22, 24. & 6. 9.

5. It consists in our *familiarity* and *acquaintance* with God, and in that *fellowship* and *friendship* that we have with him, *Job* 22. 21. 1 *Joh.* 1. 3. *Abraham* was the friend of God, *Jam.* 2. 23. and so was *bold* with him. A friend to a man will take more boldness upon him, then a stranger; so they that are friends of God.

6. It consists in *asking great things of him*: That man is *bold* with his Prince, that desires *great things* of him, as sometimes a Prince's Favourite will; thus *bold* may Believers be with God, they may ask great things of God, even the *holy Ghost* himself, *Luke 11.13.*

Quest. 2. *What manner of boldness is it where with Believers may be bold with him?*

Ans. 1. An *humble boldness*; they may be *humbly bold* with him. *Abraham* takes upon him to *speak to the Lord*, but acknowledgeth in an humble manner that he is but *dust and ashes*. Petitioners that are *bold* with their Princes, yet they ask upon their knees for what they have a desire to have: So here.

2. It is a *familiar boldness*; we may be *familiarly bold* with him. *Abraham* familiarly *communed* with God, and God with him, *Gen. 18.33.*

3. It is a *reverend boldness*: we pray to him as to a *Father*, and therefore must give him reverence, as other Children do to their Fathers: *Heb. 12.28. Let us have grace, whereby we may serve him acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.*

4. It is a *comely boldness*; we must not be rude in his Presence, but pray in *comely manner*, be-  
seeming the Presence of the great God. They that Petition to Princes, carry themselves in a *becoming manner*, and according to the Majesty they come before: So must we, we may be *bold*  
with

with the Lord in praying to him, but so as to consider *who* we are before, and *who* we have to deal with: we do it so as becomes such a Majesty as God is. Thus *Abraham* did, he was bold, but he was not rude.

5. It is a *boldness* that keeps it's distance. *Abraham* was bold with the Lord, but looks at him as *Jehovah*, as the Lord infinitely above him that was vile and base, dust and ashes. So may we be bold in praying to him, but look that we know our distance, we must look at God as he is, and look at our selves as we are.

6. It is a *boldness* that exalts Gods grace, that we may be so bold with him. *Abraham*, in all the boldness that he used, aimed at this, that the grace of God might be exalted, in not destroying, but sparing *Sodom*, that wicked place and people: Such should our boldness be.

7. It is an *holy boldness*. *Abraham* does not, dares not ask any thing that is dishonourable to the Name of God, but though he take upon him to speak to the Lord, yet it is an *holy boldness*, he requests for nothing but that that may well stand with holiness to desire, and with Gods holiness to grant.

8. It is a *boldness* full of love to those we pray for: *Abraham* was bold with God, but his love carried him out to make so bold with him, he was earnestly desirous that *Sodom* might be spared,



red, and it was out of tender love to the Righteous that he thought might be amongst them.

Quest. 3. *Why may Believers be thus bold with God in praying to him?*

Ans. 1. From the Lord, 2. From the Believers themselves.

First, *From the Lord.* 1. He hath bidden us come with boldness to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and finde grace to help in time of need, Heb. 4. 16.

2. He hath given Christ Jesus to be a great High Priest, and one that is tenderly sensible of our infirmities, and therefore encourageth us to be bold in our suits to him, ver. 4. 15.

3. He hath shewed himself willing to hear Prayer; as here to Abraham, so Psal. 65. 2. *O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come.*

4. He hath promised that we shall obtain mercy, and finde grace to help in time of need, Heb. 4. 16. We shall not lose our labour, but have what we come for at the best time.

Secondly, *From Believers.* 1. They are friends of God, as Abraham, and therefore may be bold with him.

2. They shall have all that they ask in Christ's Name, Mat. 21. 22. John 16. 23.

3. They have an Advocate with the Father to plead for them, 1 John 2. 2. and that performs

fumes their prayers with his *intercession*, Rev. 8. 3.

4. They are *near to him*, and therefore may be *bold with him*, Psal. 148, 14.

Thirdly, *From their Prayers*. 1. They *delight him*, Prov. 15. 8. Cant. 2. 14. and therefore may be *bold with him*.

2. They are *better to him* then all Ceremonies, though never so costly, Psal. 50.

3. They *come up as a memorial* before him, Acts 10. 4.

4. They are *spirituall sacrifices*, acceptable to God through *Iesus Christ*, 1 Pet. 2. 5. and therefore we may well be *bold with him* in our *prayers* to him.

*Use 1. for Information.* 1. We see how *delightful* Believers are to God, seeing they may be so *bold with him* in the Prayers that they put up to him. They that are *bold with Princes*, as Favourites be, are the *delights* of those Princes, else they durst not be so *bold with them*: So Believers must needs be *Gods delight*, seeing they are and may be so *bold with him* in praying to him: Cant. 7. 6. *How fair and pleasant art thou, O love, for delights?* Hence it is that the Lord calls his Church *Hephzibah*, *My delight is in her*; and *Beaulah*, that is, *Married: for as a Bridegroom delighteth over his Bride, so he delighteth over his people*, Isa. 62. 4, 5. They have his heart, and are his *delight*, they are the *desire of his eyes*,  
and

and that which his heart is set upon: It is so with a mans wife, and much more with Believers that are espoused and married to the Lord,

2. We see what great *honour* God puts upon Believers, that are and may be so *bold with him*. Every one may not be bold with a King, to present their Suits and Supplications before him; they are *honourable ones*, and such as he *delighteth to honour*, that may be so bold as to take upon them to speak to him: Oh how honourable then are they in the sight of God, and how does he delight to honour Believers, that take the *boldness* to take upon them to *speak to the Lord*? They are the Noble ones, and the great Peers of his Kingdome, how-ever they be *little* in their own eyes, and style themselves but *dust and ashes*, yet they are *great* in his account, and he styles them *Excellent*, and *Honourable ones*, *Pla. 16. 2, 3.* and *Prov. 12. 26.* farre above other men: they are the *Grandeers* in his Court and Kingdome,

3. We see that when they come to *glory*, they will be farre greater then now they are: for here their honour is much veiled by sin, they are *black*, and the *Sun hath looked upon them*, and their honour is *stained* by the afflictions they suffer; the Devil and the World cast all the dishonour they can upon them, as they did upon Christ Jesus, as he says, *Joh. 8. 49.* but God honours them *here*, and if so, much more will he honour

honour them when they come in Heaven. Here they are *bold with God*, and it is their honour so to be; but no honour like to *that*, when they shall be *ever with him*, and *see his face*, and by that Beatifical Vision shall be *made like to him*, and bear the Image of the heavenly one, 1 John 3.2. 1 Cor 15.49.

4. We see how marvellously the Lord condescends to *dust and ashes*, that they that have *that style* may be so bold with him, as to take upon them to *speak to the Lord*: Oh how low does he stoop to such! no *humility* like his. This is not the manner of men, this is not the manner of great Princes to come thus low; but God would *teach them*, and *teach us all*, to condescend and become low, and shews himself a pattern of *humility*, that we may be the more ashamed of our pride, and learn to stoop of such a great one as he is, *Psal. 113.*

5. We see a reason why some Believers have made so *bold with some great men* in some cases, and have spoken so freely to them, as *Dan. 3. 16.* & *5. 17.* 2 Chron. 16. 7, 8, 9. & 25. 16. They that may be so *bold with God*, and take upon them to *speak to him*, may be bold much more with men, when called to it: if with the *potter*, then with the *clay*; if with the *great God* in our suits to him, much more with the *greatest of men*, when there's cause for it.

6. We

6. We see that when at *any time* we are to pray to him, we should alwayes bear this in our minde, That we go to a *gracious King*, and a *kinde Father*, and therefore may be humbly and and reverently bold with him, as *Abraham* was. We do not go to a Prince that will terrifie us with his *looks*, that will fright us with his *words*, that will drive us from his *presence*; but to such an one as does *encourage us* to be bold with him in *Christs Name*. He is *that Friend at Court*, that we are more bold then welcome, and that he will see to it that we shall have a gracious answer, *Joh. 14. 13, 14.*

*Use 2. for Terror to Unbelievers*: they are no friends of God, and therefore *cannot be bold with him*; they have no acquaintance with him, but are strangers and enemies to him, and how should they take upon them to *speak to him*?

*Use 3. for Humiliation*: 1. That we are too *rude*, and come with less reverence then becomes us in his Presence with whom we have to do: so do *rude children* to their Father, and get a check for it, and so do we to our Father; let it *shame us*, or else we shall be sure of a check for it.

2. To those that *may be bold*, and *dare not*, or at least *will not* go so often as they might, nor take upon them to *speak to the Lord*, as he allows. What? *Friends of God*, and not be *humbly bold with him*? God forbid.

*Use 4.*



*Use 4. for Exhortation:* 1. To prize Faith, that makes us bold with God, 2 Pet. 1. 1. We prize our friendship with some men, whereby we are bold with them; how much more faith, whereby we are friends of God, Jam. 2. 23. and so bold with him.

2. To prize Christ above all, 1 Pet. 2. 7. for he it is by whom we have access with boldness, Ephes. 2. 18. Heb. 4. 14, 16. we should never have taken upon us to speak to the Lord, had it not been for him; He brings us to the Father, Joh. 14. 6.

3. To be thankfull to the Blessed Trinity, that we may be thus bold in Christ our Mediator.

4. To love that Friend and Favourite at the Court of Heaven, that hath made us friends, and bold with God.

5. To be bold in a good cause before the greatest men, and not to fear them, Prov. 24. 25.

6. To come with boldness to the Throne of Grace, having leave so to do, Heb. 4. 16.

Verse 28. Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous, wilt thou destroy all the City for lack of five? And he said, If I finde there forty and five, I will not destroy it.

Doct. XV. **T**hat Believers, when they have got one of their Requests granted, stay not there, but intreat for another.

So does Abraham here, he had got a grant for Sodom's sparing, if there were fifty found there; and now he makes another Request, that if there should lack five of the fifty, he would not destroy all the City for lack of five.

Thus Gideon, he prayed that the fleece might be wet with dew, and all the earth else might be dry; and he got a grant of that, for so it was, Judg. 6. 37, 38. but he stayes not there, but desires another, that the fleece may be dry, and all the earth wet with dew, ver. 39, 40.

Reasons. 1. From the Lord. 2. From the Believers.

First, From the Lord. 1. He is a Bountiful giver, he hath more blessings then one, he hath a full hand, and a large heart; an open hand, and a free liberal heart, Psal. 115. 16. Jam. 1. 5.

2. He gives above what we ask or think, Eph. 3. 20. and therefore one Request granted should not content us, but we should desire more of such

such an one as he is, that is able to give above all our desires.

3. He hath commanded us to *open our mouths wide*, Psal. 81. 10. to ask *more*, and to enlarge our desires: and if he *command this*, we may well do it; we cannot answer it, but must be disobedient except we ask *more*.

4. He hath promised, that *whatever we ask, believing we shall receive*; and therefore it is not the grant of *one Request* that should content us, but we should ask *more*, Mat. 21. 22. and all his promises are punctually performed, 1 Kin. 8. 24.

5. He hath put a *Royal spirit* in giving into some men, 1 Kings 2. 20. *Ask on, my Mother,* (sayes Solomon) *for I will not say thee nay.* So 1 Kings 10. 13. *He gave the Queen of Sheba all she asked, besides what he gave her of his royall bounty.* See Esth. 5. 3. & 7. 2. and if so, he will never come short of men in royalty and bounty in giving, and therefore we are not to rest in *one grant*, but sue for more.

6. He knows that we have *many wants*, and when *one* is supplied, we need *another*, and *another* to that, and so on to a *multitude*; and *many troubles* to be removed, and therefore when we sue for *one*, and have it granted, we must sue for *more*: we are *poor and afflicted* many wayes, Psal. 34. 6, 19. and therefore must go on in our suits, and ask *more*.

7. He

7. He is pleased when he sees us again and again to *renew our Requests* to him: He is not like some men, that make it an argument why they will not give again, because they have given once, Jam. 1. 5.

8. He hath an *inexhaustible Treasure*, that by the renewall of our suits, and asking more, we cannot *draw dry*. He hath a *rich Myne* by him, Rom. 10. 12. He is a *full one* that commands all blessings both in temporal and spiritual things, Psal. 50. 1 Pet. 5. 10.

Secondly, *From the Believers themselves:*

1. Their *faith* is hereby *strengthened*. Judg. 6. 37—40. *Gideons* faith in Gods deliverance of *Israel* by his hand, was *strengthened* by his *second Request* that he made to God concerning the *fleece*: and the *faith* of Gods Servants needs *strengthening*; even the Disciples of Christ were men of *weak faith*, Mark 4. 40. so that Christ could not tell how to put the name of *Faith* upon it.

2. Their *thankfulness* is hereby *more and more enlarged*. The more *Petitions* any make to a Prince, the more full of *Thanks* they come off with when they are granted. Now *thanksgiving* is *Heavenly work*, *Angelical*, *Seraphical work*, and that that God is *glorified by*, Psal. 50. 23.

3. They do *gain*, and *gather* upon God by *renewing their suits*: so did *Abraham*, he ever

in his *renewed Requests* got something, and went away a *gainer*. A new Petition to a Prince by one in favour gains something: so Believers upon every renewed Petition shall finde themselves to go away with something. Even the poor at the doors that come *often*, lose not their labour, but get something, are not sent empty away; how much less then will God deny his poor ones that renew their requests to him? *Psal. 10. 17.*

4. They are the *more welcome* the oftner they come. Men may be *weary of us* the oftner we come to them: *Prov. 25. 17. Withdraw thy foot* (sayes Solomon) *from thy neighbours house, lest he be weary of thee, and so hate thee.* A man that comes *seldome* shall be welcome to another, but if he come *often* he will but be a burthen: but it is not so with those that go *often* before the Lord, they are ever *most welcome* to him that come with *new Requests* ofttest before him.

5. They become *more dutiful and obedient to him*, if their renewed Suits be granted. So it is with all that *sue at Court*; how obsequious and dutiful will they be? and so it is with those that renew their Suits at the Throne of Grace; *I am thy servant, I am thy servant*, will each of them say, *Psal. 116. 16.* not in a Complemental-way, as sometimes they do at Court, but in a serious way, so as *dutiful servants* ought to do.

6. They do by often coming increase their fa-  
N miliarity



miliarity with God, and this is *that* that he likes well of, *Job* 22.21. and we may well delight in; for no acquaintance like his.

7. They by coming before God, and renewing their requests to him, shew forth *the exceeding greatness of their love to those they pray for*: and that the Lord is much delighted with, who is Love it self, *1 Joh.* 4.8.

8. They do by renewing their Suits to him, acknowledge his Bounty and Grace; and that he is able to give abundant supply to us in what we desire of him: and that cannot but be well-pleasing to him. Princes are well pleased when they are looked at as bountiful and gracious to their Suppliants: so is God when his Grace is exalted.

Use 1. for Information. 1. We see what a bountiful God we go to, that gives us leave to come before him with new Requests, after he hath granted *that* that we asked before of him. Men are oftentimes niggards, and if they have done something, they cease giving: but our God is liberal, and gives liberally to all, and upbraids not, *Jam.* 1.5. When we have gone once, and got what we asked of him, we may come again: and this Believers know, and therefore are encouraged to come again, and sue for more.

2. We see that the more faith any man hath, the more bold he may be with God, to put up new Requests to him. Abraham was a great Believer, and

Doct. 15. *the grant of one request.* 179

and his *faith* puts him upon a *new suit*, after the *old was granted*. What may not Believers have? and therefore they will put in for it. *Faith* will fetch in any thing that a man would have: *All things are possible to him that beleeveth*, Mar. 9. 23. and therefore the Believer will go on in his suits, and ask more after a former grant.

3. We see that it is lawful to covet after more of the *good things* that God vouchsafes to give when we make our Requests to him. To covet after *earthly things inordinately* is sin to those that *set their hearts upon them*, Phil. 3. 19. but to desire of God *other things*, and to *ask more*, after we have already got some of our Requests granted, is that that we may do, and is an *high Encomium* of our Faith, 1 Cor. 14. 1.

4. We see that *one gift* received from God makes way for *another*; the Believer takes it as a *pledge* that he shall have more. We presume upon a friend sometimes that hath done *something* at our asking, that he will do *more*; much more may we relie upon God when he does *any thing* at our request, that he will do *more*. One favour begets another: When once God is *prevailed with* to do *something* at our request, we may binde upon ic that he will do *more*; and so take courage to *renew our suits*. So did Abraham here.

5. We see what our case is here in this world,

we are alwayes *wanting something*, either for our selves or others ; and when we have got a grant of *one thing*, we need *another*, and must renew our suits. We are made up of *wants*, and when we get *one supplied*, another *looks us in the face*, and bespeaks a *new Request* to be put up to the Lord for a *fresh supply*. This is our case and state while we are in this world ; as our troubles are many here, *Psal. 34. 19.* so are our *wants*.

6. We see that Believers know *where supply is to be had*, and therefore they go to God to make a *new supply*. He is a *Fountain* that they repair unto ; a *Spring* that is never drawn dry ; a *Well* that is ever full : and therefore if our pitchers have been filled *once*, they may be filled *again*. We know where we have had a *good dole once*, and it is but *going again*. Thus a Believer argues with himself : I have fared well *once*, and will *try again* ; I have drunk at the *Well*, and have had my *fill*, and will *go again* for a *fresh supply* ; the *Spring* is yet open, and I will *repair thither again* : God is able to grant me *one Request* as well as *another*, and therefore I will seek to him yet again.

7. We see what *longings* we should have for *Heaven*, where *all our wants* shall be supplied. Here, after we have had *one mercy*, we must have *another* ; after we have had *one grant*, we must plead to get *another* : but there all shall be made

up, and we shall never know what *wants* mean more. We are there at the *Spring-head* continually, sucking in and drinking abundantly of that *Eternal Fountain*, which shall satisfy us to all Eternity. The *blessed Angels* and *glorified Souls* feel no *wants*, they are fully satiate and replenished with God; and so shall we when we come thither, *Psal. 17. 15.*

8. We see how good it is to be in a *believing state*, for such can go to God and get a grant, and go again for more, and so gain upon God by suing to him. *Faith* is an excellent and precious grace, 2 Pet. 1. 1. that can, when one suit is granted, bring in another; it is a *Christians boldness*, and makes him bold to bring fresh suits into the presence of the Holy One.

9. We see that the Lord must needs be much taken with a believing Suppliant, that is *unwearied* in making his addresses to him. It *delights* a father to see a childe often asking something or other of him: so does our renewed suit delight God. *Faith* is that one eye that ravisheth Christs heart, Cant. 4. 9.

10. We see that the more we come with renewed suits to the Throne of Grace, the nearer we come to resemble *Abrahams faith*; for so did he, when he had obtained something, he renews his request for more, therein he shewed his faith: and in so doing we shall walk in the steps of that

faith of his, and be like him who is the father of us all.

Use 2. for Terror to Unbelievers; They get nothing in spiritual things, and therefore have no encouragement to come again to renew their suits: Job. 9. 31. God heareth not sinners. So Psal. 66. 18.

Use 3. for Humiliation to those that slack this duty of renewing their suits. Job 15. 4. There are those that restrain prayer before God: What should we have something done for us, and not be encouraged to go again? God forbid.

Use 4. for Exhortation: 1. To be thankful to the Lord, who (as he gives us leave) so gives us hearts to renew our suits; and having got something, to ask more. Poor ones would be thankful to men for this, much more should we be thankful to the Lord.

2. To honour Believers, that are so honoured of God that they may, and do bring new Requests before the Lord. These are they that are in favour with God; and if Kings Favourites be honoured, much more should these.

3. To pity those that get nothing, neither care whether they do or no; that cannot pray, nor will not set about the duty in a serious way: these will never ask for more, because they get nothing, Jam. 1. 6, 7. Proud Beggars when sent empty away, will come no more; so here.

4. To



4. To love *Jesus Christ*, through whom we get a grant of our *Requests*, and are encouraged to ask more, and renew our suits, *Eph. 2. 18.*

5. To long to be at the *Well-head*, and that *everlasting Spring* that will make a full supply of all our spiritual wants, when we shall enjoy what we desired here, and farre more.

6. Till we come to the blessed *satisfaction* that we shall have in glory, let us be exhorted to renew our *Requests* daily, and having sped well in some of our suits, let us ask more. We go to a full *Fountain*, to a rich *Treasure*, that (*Phil. 4. 19.*) can supply all our wants by *Jesus Christ*.

Verse 18. — And he said, If I finde forty and five there, I will not destroy it.

Doct. XVI. **T**hat the Lord is willing to grant the renewed *Requests* that *Believers* bring before him; and when they ask more, they shall have more given in to them.

*Abraham* desires here, That if there were five and forty *Righteous* found in *Sodom*, the place might not be destroyed: and God gives him a gracious *Answer* to this new *Petition*; If I finde forty and five there, I will not destroy it.

*Gideon* renewed his *Request* about the fleece, and that request was granted, as well as the

former, *Judg. 6. 39, 40.* He knows how to make *new grants*, as well as other Princes do. If Kings Subjects renew their *Requests*, and get *renewed Grants*, then *his* faithful Subjects much more.

*Reasons.* 1. From the Lord. 2. From his believing Suiters and Suppliants. 3. From the Grants themselves.

First, *From the Lord himself.* 1. He is *Rich unto all that call upon him*, *Rom. 10. 12.* and having enough by him, how can he but *renew his grants*, and give more when we sue and seek unto him for it. Rich men give according to their quality and condition; so God that is *rich in mercy*.

2. He is a *great King*, *Mal. 1. 14.* and will give according to the state of a King: and they (*as I said*) that are Kings on earth, stick not at *renewed Grants*; and how then should he that is the *great King over all the earth*? *Psal. 47. 2.*

3. His *Mercies are new every morning*, *Lam. 3. 23.* the Sun is not oftner seen by us, then his *Mercies*; they look us in the face *every day*. The Light of the day does no more fail us, then his *mercies* do. The Morning is not oftner renewed upon us, then his *mercies* are: and therefore what new grant is there greater then the former, that we may not have from him, if we seek it of him.

4. He treads never a step, but *that that is paved*

paved with mercy: *All the paths of the Lord are mercy to them that fear him, and to them that keep his Covenant, Psal. 25. 10.* His paths that he comes in towards us in his *Ordinances*, in his *Providences*, they are all beset and bespread with *mercies*, and therefore what *new mercy* it is that we would have, and what more then formerly we have had for our selves or others, he is willing to give in to us.

5. He hath *commanded* us not to withhold from others that which is their due, when it is in the power of our hand to do it, *Prov. 3. 27.* and if so, then sure he will not withhold any thing from us, if we seek it of him, though it be *new*, seeing it is in the power of his hand to do it. He would not be out-bidden and out-vied by man; he would not fall short (in a way of kindness and goodness) of any of the sons of men.

6. He is a *God hearing prayer*, *Psal. 65. 2.* he is alwayes at it. Other Princes have their times appointed to hear their Suiters, their *set times* and *dayes of audience* to hear Ambassadors; but God is *alwayes* hearing his Suiters: and be it that our Prayers be the *Souls Ambassadors*, yet he puts them not off, but is *alwayes hearing*; and therefore what *new Requests* we come with, we may get a grant from him of them.

Secondly, *From his believing Suppliants:*

1. They are his *Loyal Subjects*, he is *King of Saints*,

*Saints*, Rev. 15. 3. and Loyal and faithful Subjects may get their Grants renewed, much more may his.

2. They are *his Servants*, Psal. 116. 16. and Servants of Princes, such as they are that are of the Bed-chamber, as they are *wise* to take their time to renew their suits, so they have the Kings ear, and a new Grant *signed* and *sealed* to them: and shall the Servants of God fare worse then the Servants of Princes? Surely no.

3. They are in *favour with him*, and *accepted of him*, Eph. 1. 6. and what new Grants have not they that are in favour with Princes? and shall not we much rather that are in favour with God? *Brutus* with *Julius*, *Mecenas* with *Augustus*, *Sejanus* with *Tiberius*, what might they not have had of these *great ones*? and if so, what new grants may not the Saints have of him that *hath made us accepted in the beloved*?

4. They are *his Friends*, Jam. 2. 23. and any friend will get a *new grant*, and have more for *asking*: what can God *deny us* then that seek for *new favours*, and *new grants* from him.

5. They are *his Followers*, Eph. 5. 1. they imitate him in his Virtues and Excellencies, and such may have any thing of him. *Similitude* works us up to the height: we love those that *resemble us*, so does God; and we may have what we will of him, if we be *like to him*.

6. They

6. They please him, and therefore may have what they will of him, *Joh. 15. 7. & Joh. 3. 22.* let them renew their suits as often as they will, he will renew his grants as often to them; and if they would have more, they shall have more.

Thirdly, *From the renewed grants themselves.*

1. They are easily made by him, it is as easie with him to give more as less, to renew twenty as well as one: He can do every thing, *Job 42. 2.*

2. They are quickly and speedily done; they are sometimes granted before they are asked, *Isa. 65. 24. Dan. 9. 23.*

3. They are cordially given in, with all his heart, and with all his soul, *Jer. 32. 40, 41.* and what should hinder their coming in then to us?

4. They tend to his honour; he hath the glory of them given to him, *Lam. 3. 23.* he hath new songs for his new mercies, *Psal. 40. 3.*

5. They binde us to duty and obedience. New Grants made by Princes, oblige the Subjects to duty and obedience: so these grants from God.

6. They are greatly *indearing* our hearts to God. Princes by their liberality endear their Servants to them; so does God: His love to us, begets our love to him, *1 Joh. 4. 19.* It is observed of King *James*, That he bound those he loved unto him, by granting them some Request that they made suit for, which he thought bound their love to him: so does God by his grants endear our hearts to him.

*Use*



*Use 1. for Information.* 1. We see what a full-handed and open-hearted God we have to do with, that both *can* and *will* give us *more* for asking, and make *renewed grants* to us. We do not come to a poor Prince, but to one that is rich and full, and hath great things to give; and if we renew our *Requests*, he can *easily* and *speedily* renew his *grants*. We make supplication to him that can give us *what we ask of him*, and as often as we come with new suits to him. He is a rich Prince, and so full of royalty, that he will give us our asking, though we desire more then formerly. Kings know how to rise in their grants, as suppliants do in their suits: so here, 1 Pet. 3. 12.

2. We see what great *encouragements* we have to *renew our suits*, and to ask more; for God is willing to renew his grants as we do our suits, and if we would have something more then we desired at first, he is very willing to come off to us, and to give us more. Would any Prince on earth so do, his Court would be full of suiters, they would press in for *audience*, and fill his doors, and be much encouraged to come: Oh how full of suiters should the Court of Heaven then be, and what encouragement should they take to *ask more*, and to come with *new suits*, that have such a God to go to that will give more according as we ask, and *renew grants* as we do our suits, Psal. 65. 2. Jer. 33. 3.

3. We

3. We see how truly he is styled *A God hearing prayer*, Psal. 65. 2. that does thus *renew grants* to his humble suppliants desires: his ears are *alwayes open* to their desires. Princes cannot *alwayes attend* the suits of their Subjects, they have somewhat else to do: but God, though he be working other wayes, *creating work*, and *providential work*, yet he hath an *hearing ear* to all our supplications, and is not wearied out with our suits, though *renewed*, nor is his *bounty spent*, though we *ask more* of him.

4. We see what *new songs of praise* we should present him with, for such *renewed grants* given us to us. *Renewed Mercies* call for *renewed thanksgivings*; and when God is willing to come off with *more to us*, we should think it our duty to *give more praise*. They that get much from a *bountifull giver*, are abundant in *thanks*: so should we to God, Psal. 71. 14, 15. the *Angels*, and *blesst Soules* in glory, that have received most, are *fullest of praises*, Isa. 6. 3. Rev. 4. 8.

5. We see what *renewed obedience* we should *cheerfully perform* to him that renews his grants according to our suits. *New obedience*, as it is *most acceptable*, so it is *most suitable* to come off with for *new grants* and *new favours*: as it is that that God requites, and prefers *above sacrifice*, 1 Sam. 15. 22. Jer. 7. 22, 23. so it is that that is *meet to be given* to the Lord. *New bounties* from  
men

men call for *new service*: so do God's much more call for *new obedience*.

6. We see what *renewed love* we should shew forth to him. Princes binde their Subjects love to them by being *bountiful* to them in renewing their grants: Oh what *love* then should we express to him, that renews *his grants*, and gives in more of his *Royal bounty*? all is too little that we can do this way; but if it were as full as the Sea is of *water*, and the Sun of *light*, and the Stars of *influences*, we should freely give it all to him, *Mat. 22. 37.* Love, as it makes us *like to God*, who is *Love it self*, 1 *Joh. 4. 8.* so it is our duty to grow up in it more and more. What do they in Heaven but *praise and love*? and we should begin that here, that is in its perfection there.

Use 2. for *Terrour* to those that *ask not*, and know not how to *renew their Requests*: it is no wonder if these get *nothing*, for how should they when they *will not ask*? *Jam. 4. 2.*

Use 3. for *Humiliation* to those of the *Saints* that are too *slack* in renewing their suits, and asking more at the Lords hands: they deprive themselves of many a *fair blessing*, and dam up the *flowings* of their own *praises*. God might have *more glory* from them, and they *more sweets* from him, could they *ask more*, and renew their suits.

Use 4. for *Exhortation*: 1. To be frequent in renewing

renewing our suits, and asking still more and more, as *Abraham* here did. God is very ready to give more, and to renew grants according as we make *Requests to him*, *Joh. 16. 24.* the more we ask in *Christ's Name*, the more we shall be sure to receive: we may be *straitned* in asking, but he cannot, *will not* in giving.

2. To sing *new songs* for all the *renewed grants* that he hath made to us. If he hath come off liberally to us, in granting more to us according to our suits, let not us be sparing of his praises. Every *additional mercy* calls on us to *add* to our *thanksgivings to him*: Every *new mercy* bespeaks for *praise renewed* from us. A *new Suite of Clothes* becomes us, and a *new Set of Praise* becomes us better. *Praise is comely*, *Psal. 147. 1.* but never more then when God gives in his answers to our Prayers, and his new mercies with them.

3. To *imitate him*, in renewing grants to his poor ones; and if *they* desire more, let them have more, *Eph. 5. 1, 2.* What pattern like him?

4. To be *Renewed in the spirit of our mindes*, and to be *new creatures*, *new men* and *women*: new favours call for this, *2 Cor. 5. 17.*

5. To renew our *Covenant* with the Lord, as he renews his *grants to us*, *Nehem. 9. 38.*

6. To long for *heaven*, where we shall praise, and love, & obey our God perfectly, willingly, chearfully, constantly, and after a *new manner*, otherwise then we do now in a *state of childhood*.

Verse

Verse 29. *And he spake to him yet again, and said, Per-  
adventure there shall be forty found there: and he  
said, I will not do it for forties sake.*

Doct. XVII. **T***hat Believers, when God re-  
news his grants to them, do not  
cease asking, but yet again follow him with  
their suits, to obtain yet more favour from  
him.*

*Abraham here had his renewed grant, That if  
there were but five and forty Righteous in the City,  
it should not be destroyed for their sakes; but he  
rests not there, but still follows on to sue fur-  
ther, That if there should be forty found, the  
place might be spared for their sakes.*

Believers, like Beggars, are not weary of ask-  
ing, but come again and again thither where  
their desires have been granted, and where they  
have fared well; and been kindly dealt with.  
Courtiers that go to a gracious Prince, and have  
their *Renewed suits* granted, fear not to go again  
and again; and to follow such a Prince with their  
suits for further favour: So here.

*Reasons.* 1. From the Lord. 2. From Be-  
lievers.

1. *From the Lord.* 1. He is *Abundant in good-  
ness*, Exod. 34. 6. the whole Earth is full of it,  
Psal. 119. 64. and this Believers know, and that  
makes



makes them incessant in their suing to him, and after his renewed grants, to follow him with suits again and again.

2. He is a *Sun*, Psal. 84. 11. Now the *Sun* is that that gives out, and communicates of its light, and heat, and influences that it is full of: So does God; He is a *full one*; and hath enough to supply us with, and therefore we cannot come too often to him in our suits: and this puts us upon it to follow him with our requests, and to speak to him in Prayer yet again, as *Abraham* did here;

3. He hath not stinted us, nor put any bounds to our lawfull desires, but hath bidden us ask what we will, and as often as we will, to ask great things, and many things; Jer. 33. 3. Joh. 15. 7. and this encourageth Believers not to stint themselves, or to say to themselves, *Hitherto we will go, and no further; and when we have got this, and that, and the other; we will ask no more.*

4. He hath promised, that we shall have all we ask according to his will; 1 Joh. 5. 14, 15. and therefore we may well go again and again to him; and not give over, though we have got our renewed suits granted to us. Princes promises encourage Subjects Addresses to them; as we see in the Promises of *Ahasuerus* to *Esther*, and *Herod* to his *Dancing Adinon*: how much more then will Gods promises encourage us in our prayers to him?

ing. He desires to hear us speaking to him, Cant. 2. 14. *Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice:* and if he desire this, we may well be encouraged to come again. We may well let him have his desire, that lets us have ours.

6. He takes pleasure in our often coming, Cant. 2. 14. *Sweet is thy voice:* Our Prayers are musick and melody in his ears. Hence also the Prayers of Believers are compared to *Incense*, Psal. 141. 2. and that had a fragrant sweet smell: Such are Believers Prayers, they are sweet-scented, fragrant, savour well in his nostrils, they are *delightful* to him; and this may well put us upon it to follow him with our suits, that are so acceptable to him in Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. 2. 5.

Secondly, *From Believers.* 1. They are and may be bold with God, (as I said before) and from that *holy boldness* do go again and again to him, Heb. 4. 16. They that have leave to be bold with Kings, as Favourites have, may go as oft as they will to them; and though they have got their renewed grants, yet they will come again: so it is with Believers that are in favour with God.

2. Though they have many desires granted, and many of their suits hearkned to, yet their wants are many still, and will be while they are in this world; and if some be supplied, yet they need more, and therefore cannot but come again. We are made up of wants; and when we have got something,

*something, we need more*; when *this* and *that* favour hath been brought in to us, still we are lacking something further, and therefore cannot but go to him again for supplies, *Phil. 4. 19.*

3. They know they go to a *liberal one*, that gives to all liberally, *Jam. 1. 5.* and therefore though they have received *this*, and *that*, and the other benefit from him, yet if they speak yet again, and *ask on*, he will not deny them: and this puts them on to sue for further favour.

4. They do not use to deny their friends that sue to them, though they come often; and therefore cannot but judge that they fall infinitely short of God, who is rich in mercy, *Eph. 2. 4.* and this puts them upon it to go often to the Throne of Grace, and again and again to ask for further favour, though they have prevailed in their suits before.

5. They have engaged themselves to call upon God as long as they live, *Psal. 116. 2.* and this obligation of theirs puts them upon it to make frequent addresses to him; and though they have got their desires in some things, yet they cannot there make a stop, but must ask further, as *Abraham* here did.

6. They are the more welcome, the oftner they come, and the more suits they bring. Some men will say to their friends, That the oftner they come, the more welcome they be; and some say it feignedly,

and others in *truth* and *reality* : but however it is with men, it is so with God, he is *best pleased with us* when we are most frequently with him, we are most welcome to him, when he hears us oftneft with him. It's said of *Enoch*, that *walked constantly with God*, Gen. 5. 22. and followed his fuits hard, that *he had this testimony, that he pleased God*, Heb. 11. 5. and so it is with them that *come again*, they are *welcome*, and that puts them upon coming.

Use 1. for Information. 1. We see that Believers are *restless* in their motions towards the Lord; they are like the *Heavenly Bodies*, that cannot stand still : Though they have got much at the Lords hands by bringing their fuits before him, yet they cannot rest there, but must try the Lord yet further, and get *something more* ; their Suits must go on, their Prayers must not have bounds set to them, but when new grants have been made, yet they must pray further, and speak yet again, as *Abraham* here did. That man that ceaseth Prayer, though he hath got much, walketh not in the steps of the faith of *Abraham*, or at least keeps not pace with him in a way believing.

2. We see that Believers have great interest in God, for they make many fuits to him ; yea, when they have got much, yet cannot stop there, but will ask for more, and try the Lord for more grace be given in to them. Great is their interest in

Princes

Princes that can do so, and such and much more is Believers interest in the Lord: God is *theirs*, and therefore they are emboldened to ask so much of him, *Psal. 119. 94. & 118. 28.*

3. We see that they that sit still, and quiet themselves in grace received, and do not come again as need is, but restrain prayer, as they cast off fear, *Job 15. 4.* so they are not of the faith of *Abraham*, for though he had suit after suit granted, yet he *sued still*, and spake yet again.

4. We see that a Believers restless motion in praying, comes near *Angelical work*; for, the *Angels* cease not night nor day in praising God, *Rev. 4.* and Believers here cease not to call upon God; and though they have obtained much, yet they rest not there, but must have more: and who would not be like the *Angels*? who would not follow those *Celestial Spirits*? it is a rare thing to imitate those glorious *Heroes*, and to serve our *King* like those noble Courtiers that wait continually upon him, and alwayes behold his face.

5. We see what longing desires we should have to be in Heaven, where we shall be alwayes in his Presence, and never cease serving of him, *Rev. 22. 3, 4.* Here we do something like the service of God there, in that we cease not our suits to him; onely here is the difference, that what we do here is imperfect service, and we have our clogs and hindrances in what we best do, but in Heaven, as



we shall be more *constant*, so we shall never be interrupted in our service, nor have any *clog* or *hindrance* at all: and therefore we should long for that *blessed place*, where we shall have *restless motions* in what we do for him *there*, and shall never cease serving him with all our strength and might.

6. We see that Faith is an *active grace*, it is upon the wing, it is upon the *suit for*, and *pursuit of grace and mercy*: though it hath got much, yet it is still busie, and slackes not its pace, but hastes to the *Kings Court* to make more *Requests*, to present more *supplications at the Throne of Grace*. It is an *operative grace*, its never idle, but ever at work, 1 *Thess.* 1.3. *Remembering your work of faith.*

7. We see that Believers are the *praying men*, and are the most incessant in that duty. Hypocrites may call upon God for a time, but they will soon give out; *Will he alwayes call upon God?* sayes *Job*, *Job* 27.10. but sound Believers hold out in Prayer, and when they have been heard, God shall hear of them again, and they have something to say further to him, as *Abraham* here, that *spake yet again.*

8. We see that the Lord *condescends very much* to Believers, that gives them leave to come so frequently into his Presence, and to bring suit after suit before him: This is not the manner of

of men, this is not the manner of Princes, but God does thus, and there's none like to him, in so *humbling himself* in admitting us to come so often into his Presence to ask more of him, *Psal. 113. 5, 6.*

*Use 2. for Terror* to those that *faint*, and give out in Prayer, as Hypocrites do. *Abraham* here teacheth them another thing, he brings suit after suit before the Lord; and though he was heard, and his requests were granted, yet he rests not in what he had obtained, but seeks for more favour, and *speaks yet again.*

*Use 3. for Humiliation* to those of the *Saints* that are too apt to *faint*, when they get not a *speedy answer*; or if they do, rest in what they have, and seek no further. *Abraham*, that excellent Believer, did not so, but he goes on in his suit for more, and so should all that would be *blessed with him.*

*Use 4. for Exhortation* 1. To *blush* at our *sparing to speak*; we deprive our selves of many a fair blessing that we might be loaden with, and carry home in our laps with us.

2. To trace *Abrahams steps* here, and whatever we have got formerly, let us follow our suit still, we shall be sure to be no losers by it. We can never draw the *Fountain* dry.

3. To glorifie him that gives us leave to come often, and to ask more; and say as *David* did in

another case, *Is this the manner of men, O Lord God?* 2 Sam. 7. 19.

4. To let him have the vigour and strength of our love, that makes such an entrance for us to the Throne of Grace, to come so often before the Lord. Oh what love is not Jesus Christ worthy of?

5. To beware we be not troubled when men shut up their ears and doors against us; his are always open to us, we may go as often as we will to ask more.

6. To rejoice that we have such a God to go unto, and that we have a way open to us in our blessed Redeemer and great High Priest.

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Verse 29. — *And he said, I will not do it for forties sake.*

Doct. XVIII. **T**Hat God is unwearied in granting the Requests of his believing Suppliants, how often soever they make their Addresses in Prayer to him.

Psal. 55. 17. *Evening, morning, and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud, and he shall hear me. God is not, will not be tired out; how often soever we come, but will hear and grant.*

*Abraham prayed, That if there were fifty Righteous*

*Righteous found in Sodom, that it might be spared; and God granted that: and then, If there were five and forty; and God granted that: and then, If there were forty; and God granted that. As Believers are unwearied in asking, so is God in giving out grants to them.*

*Reasons.* 1. From God. 2. From Believers. 3. From their Prayers.

First, *From God.* 1. *He fainteth not, neither is weary, Isa. 40. 28.* and if in other respects he fainteth not, neither is weary, then he is not weary in granting the desires of his people, though they come often before him to ask more of him. The unjust Judge said that the widow by her often coming would weary him, Luke 18. 5. but God is not weary, how many Petitions soever they put up to him.

2. *He hath commanded us that we should pray and not faint, Luke 18. 1. 1 Thess. 5. 17.* and if he would not have us faint in Prayer, then much less will he faint, and be weary in attending to the voice of our frequent Requests to him.

3. *He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength, Isa. 40. 29.* and therefore cannot be weary himself when we pray to him, though we should ask, and ask again, and put up many Petitions to him.

4. *He delighteth in our prayers, Prov. 15. 8.* and how then can he be weary to grant our requests which

which he *delights in*. There may be a kinde of *weariness* attending other *delights* of *sinful men*, but what the holy God *delights in*, he cannot be weary of.

5. He is a *great King*, Psal. 47. 2. Mal. 1. 14. and shews himself *like himself*, and *like a King*: and as other Kings are *unwearied in granting* what their Favourites sue for, how often soever they come, and how much soever they ask: so it is with the Lord.

6. He *commands us to be unwearied in giving*, Mar. 5. 42. Luke 6. 30. and this latter place, that it must be to every man that asks, holds out *unweariedness in giving*: and he that layes this charge upon us, that we should *not be weary of this*, surely he must needs be much more *unwearied himself in giving grants to us*.

Secondly, *From Believers*. 1. They are not *weary of asking*, as Abraham here; and how then can he be *weary of granting*? We may weary some men this way, but not God.

2. They are some of them *unwearied in giving*, as it is said of Mr. John Fox, That he never *denied any that asked for Jesus sake*. And if among men there be found some that are *unwearied in giving*, then much more is it true of the Lord, That he is *unwearied in granting the Requests of his believing Suppliants*, how often soever they pray to him.

3. They



3. They ask nothing but that which is *according to his will*, and they that so ask are ever heard, 1 *Joh.* 5. 14, 15. God is never weary of such men, nor of their Prayers, come they as oft as they will to sue to him. If the *Kings will* be in the Petitions that are put up to him, he will not be tired out with such Petitions, though frequently presented to him: So here.

4. They *ask in faith*, and faith will carry all before it. God will be unwearied in granting what we ask in faith. They that *doubt*, get nothing, *Jam.* 1. 6, 7. but they that *pray in faith*, every thing, *Mat.* 21. 22. let them come as often as they will they shall be heard: God will not be weary of them, nor of their suits.

5. They *pray fervently*, and *fervent prayers avail much*, *Jam.* 5. 16. Earnest suiters are ever speeders with men, much more with the Lord; he cannot tell how to turn them off, or to be weary of them that *pray earnestly*, though frequently bringing suit after suit before him.

6. They *pray sincerely*, *Psal.* 17. 1. their heart goes with their lips, and he takes *pleasure in sincerity*, 1 *Chron.* 29. 17. Even good men *delight in uprightness*, how much more the Lord? and therefore he cannot be weary of such Prayers, but must needs grant them.

Thirdly, *From their Prayers.* 1. They are *pure prayers*; so were *Abrahams* here: so *Job* sayes,

saves, *My prayer is pure*, Job 16. 17.

2. They are *pleasant* Prayers, Cant. 2. 14. and how should the Lord then be weary of them? He took pleasure in *Abrahams* frequent and renewed suits, and therefore could not deny a grant to them.

3. They are *humble* Prayers. *Abraham* all along, though bold in his suits, yet was very *humble*, and God takes it well to see us *humble* when we pray to him.

4. They are *zealous* Prayers: so were *Abrahams* here; and this *holy fire* ever ascends and prevails, when our Prayers are offered up with it, 1 Kings 18. 37.

5. They are *argumentative* Prayers, as *Abrahams* were; and God is pleased when we argue the case with him in Prayer. So did the *woman of Canaan*; and got what she would.

6. They are *inwrought* Prayers, Jam. 5. 16. such were *Abrahams* here; he did not word it with God, but what requests he made were *inwrought*, and came from the heart, and God was not weary of them.

Use 1. for Information. 1. We see what great encouragement we have to come with suit upon suit before the Lord, for he is *unwearied* in granting the requests of his *believing Suppliants*, how often soever they make their addresses to him, Psal. 65. 2. So it is with them that come before

fore gracious Princes, when they finde them willing to grant what they sue for, and are not wearied out with their Requests that they put up to them, they will come *again* and *again*, and venture upon their Clemency, and bring *suit upon suit*, and are encouraged to follow them with their supplications: so it should be with us in our suits to a gracious God, we cannot *tire him out*, but he is *unwearied* in giving out grants to us

2. We see what cause we have *not to be weary of well-doing*, Gal. 6.9. for if he be *unwearied* in granting our desires, it were a shame for us to be *weary* of what he would have us do for him in such a way. We are apt to be weary of any thing that is good, and are soon tired out, but Gods *unweariedness* in doing for us, should make us blush when we are *weary* of that wherewith we may serve him, or do good to others for his sake.

3. We see how *happy* the state of the *blessed Angels* are, that as they never yet *trod a wry step*, but have been constant and *unwearied* in a way of obedience; so they shall keep an *unwearied course* therein to all Eternity, *Psal. 103. 20, 21.* God hath been *unwearied* in his *favour* to them, and they are *unwearied* in their *duty* to him, and this is their height of Happiness.

4. We see what *longings* we should have after *that time*, when we shall be *unwearied* in our *services* and *duties* to him. Here we are soon *weary* and

and tired out with what he calls for, and tread many a wry step in what we do in way of duty to him; but when we come in *Heaven*, we shall never be weary more, but shall *praise*, and *love*, and *obey* him to all Eternity. This state we should *long for*, and be weary of our weariness in our duties here.

5. We see what our duty is, to *imitate* and *follow him* in being unwearied in answering the desires of his poor ones that sue to us: though they should come *often* to us, and bring *one Request after another* to us, if it be *in the power of our hand*, we are to take pattern by the Lord himself, and not to turn away our ears from their cries, *Prov. 3. 27, 28.*

6. We see how *unworthy* we should count our selves of such a mercy as this is, that God should be so unwearied in granting the Requests of his poor ones: Who are we, that we should bring *suit upon suit* before him, and have *all granted*? This should lay us *low* before him, and we should judge our selves (as *Jacob* did) *less then the least of all his mercies*, *Gen. 32. 10.*

7. We see what cause Believers have to *exalt Grace*, that goes on in an *unwearied course* and way of *granting* what we sue unto him for. *Heaven* and *Earth*, *Angels* and *Men* may say, *Grace, Grace*, for this. What *loud acclamations* are made to Princes by their People when they make *great*  
Grants

*Grants* to them? Oh what *shoutings*, and loud *acclamations* then should we make for this great *Grace* of his towards us? See for illustration of this, *Zech. 4. 7.* and *Psal. 149. 6.*

8. We see what *height of praise* we shall come off with in another world, for these large *grants* made to us here. Here we do a *little*, but we do but *bungle* at this duty of *praise*; here we can cry like children for what we want, but in Heaven we shall be *men*, and perform our duty of *praise* to purpose: There Songs will be in our *mouths and hearts*, and new Songs of *praise*.

Use 2. for *Terror* to Unbelievers; They get nothing for all this *bounty*, they are weary of praying, and God is weary of them, and will not hear them, *Psal. 66. 18.* *Joh. 9. 30.*

Use 3. for *Humiliation* to the *Saints*, that do not so often put up their *Requests* as they might; nor bring *suit upon suit*, as *Abraham* here did; they miss of many a grant which they might have made over to them, for God is *unwearied* in granting what we ask of him.

Use 4. for *Exhortation*: 1. To love the Lord; that is so *unwearied* in giving out his *grants* to us. What love would we not express to a man that should so do with us? Oh! but God deserveth infinitely more.

2. To be *unwearied* in our praises to him, we can never do it *enough*, nor long enough, till the doors



doors of *Eternity* be opened to us, *Psal. 145. 20*

3. To follow him with suit upon suit, we shall not lose our labour, nor pray in vain. This King is not he that can deny us any thing that we ask.

4. To be followers of God, in attending to all the just desires of friends or poor ones, and not to be weary of doing them good, *Luke 6. 30*. we cannot follow a better pattern.

5. To abound alwayes in the work of the Lord, *1 Cor. 15. 58*. according as he abounds in mercy to us, in his frequent and renewed grants to us, and his unweariedness in them.

6. To be unwearied in every duty and service to him and men, that he calls for from us.

7. To be unwearied in suffering, *Heb. 12. 9*. *2 Tim. 4. 5*.

8. To be unwearied in striving against sins, *Heb. 12. 4*.

Verse 30. And he said unto him, O let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak, &c.

Doct. XIX. **T**hat believing Suppliants are afraid that God may be angry at their prayers, and desire earnestly of him, that he would not be angry with them when they pray unto him.

The Text is full for it ; so is that in *Judg. 6. 39*.

Gideon

Gideon prays, *Let not thine anger be hot against me, &c.*

Let me open the first Branch first,  
That believing Suppliants are afraid that God  
may be angry at their prayers.

And for opening of it, let me shew 1. *How*  
it does appear that they are afraid that God may  
be angry with their Prayers. 2. *Why* they are  
afraid of this. 3. *The Uses.*

Quest. 1. *How does it appear that they are*  
*afraid of God being angry with their prayers?*

Ans. 1. In regard of themselves. 2. In re-  
gard of their Prayers.

First, *In regard of themselves.* 1. In that they  
think they may be *too bold with him*, and press  
*too much upon him*: so did Abraham here, and  
so did Gideon in the place before-mentioned.  
They that Petition to Princes, are sometimes so  
bold, that they think they may be over-bold with  
them, and so incur their displeasure: so it is  
with them that petition to the Lord.

2. They are *vile*, and God a *glorious One*, and  
therefore that they should come so often into  
his presence, and follow him so with suit upon  
suit, they may well fear that such a glorious One  
may be angry at such *vile ones* as they are. So  
Abraham, so Job looked at themselves, and so  
every believing humble suppliant does, and ought  
to think.

3. In that they would keep that *due distance* that is between God and them, and therefore they are *afraid* that he may be angry that that *distance* hath not been observed. The truth is, though Princes and Subjects have this kept, yet we are not so careful to observe it when we draw near to the Lord. Little do we think *who God is* that we have to do with, and *who we are* that come before him: now Believers are sensible of this, and so are afraid that God may be angry with their Prayers.

4. In that they desire *pardon* for their prayers, Dan. 9. 19. and therefore are *afraid* he may be angry with their Prayers.

5. In that they *confess* the *sins* of their prayers, Psal. 130. 3. *If thou Lord shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?* if in our *best duties* God should mark our failings and sins, there would be no *standing* before him, he might well be angry with them. See Ezra 9. 15.

6. In that they *finde it so*, and expostulate with God about it, Psal. 80. 4. God can be *angry*, and *long angry* at the prayers of his people: and what he is to *some of them*, he may be to *any of them*, and the best believers may be afraid of it.

Secondly, *In regard of their Prayers.* 1. They are *defiled*, and need *washing* in Christs Blood: and being *so defiled*, they may well be afraid that God may be angry with them, Isa. 64. 6. The  
righte-

righteousness of our *best performances*, as well as of our *persons*, is *silly Rags*, no menstruous Clout is more defiled then our Prayers are, as they come from us.

2. They are *full of wandrings*, our hearts are *unfixed* in the duty of Prayer. There are many *roving thoughts* that we are hurried and carried about with, that marre the duty, if God pass them not by, and we may well fear that God may be angry for them. *David* had a *fixed heart*, Psal. 57. 7. but ours too often *gad abroad*. What is said of the *Adulteress*, may be said of our *adulterous hearts*: now it is said of her, Prov. 7. 11, 12. *Her feet abide not in her house, now she is without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.* So it is true of us when we come before the Lord in Prayer; our false hearts abide not close to the duty, but now they are *without*, now in the *streets*, and lye in wait to *deceive us* at every corner of the world, thinking of *this*, and *that*, and the *other vain things*; yea, hundreds of these *flies* (if we watch not in Prayer) will be *buzzing* about us, and carry us away from God and the duty, from one *England* to another, and into all the corners of the world: and this may well make us afraid that God will be angry at our Prayers.

3. They are not *serious* Prayers, nor we *serious* and upright in them: the *duty* it self is a

serious duty, and God is serious with us in *commanding it*, but we are apt to trifle with him in it, and rather to sport and play with the duty, and to *word it* with God, then to express any seriousness at all in it: the *heart* is gone far from God, when the *lips* are near him, Mat. 15.8. these are hypocritical Prayers, and they that offer them up, Hypocrites, ver. 7. Now Believers Prayers have a *tang* of hypocrisie in them sometimes, and therefore they may fear that God may be angry with them.

4. They are not so *earnest* and *feruent* Prayers as God calls for, they are not so *heated* with the fire of the Spirit as God expects, Jude ver. 20. Jam. 5.16. though this cannot be said of Abraham, yet of many that go for Believers it may, that are *dull*, and *heavy*, and *sleepy* in Prayer, as the Disciples of Christ sometimes were, Mat. 26. 39, 40. now may they well then fear that such Prayers God may be angry with. A Prince would be angry with a *cold Suit*; so God with *cold* Prayers.

5. They are *angry* Prayers, *passionate* Prayers, have too much *wilde-fire* in them: So had *Jonah* when he prayed, he rather *vented his passion*, then prayed, *Jonah* 4. 1, 2, 3. and threw out words in his *heat* against the Lord. So *Elijah* cannot be excused from *too much heat*, and therefore *James* calls him a *passionate man*, Jam. 5. 17. So *James* and



and *John* had too much *heat of spirit*, *Luke 9. 54.* and so others have had : now such fire of our own kindling God no way approves of, and therefore the Saints may well fear that he may be angry with such *angry Prayers*. Would not a King be angry if a Petitioner should be *passionate with him* that sues unto him ? So here.

6. They are sometimes *unconstant Prayers*, they are but *now and then* performed ; God hears of us but *seldome*, or it may be when we are in *affliction*, *Isa. 26. 16.* *Hos. 5. 15.* and may we not then fear that God will be angry with such Prayers ? Will not a father be angry when his children come *seldome* into his sight to ask what they stand in need of ? so will God ; and therefore we may well fear that he will be displeased with such Prayers.

Quest. 2. *Why are Believers afraid that God may be angry with their Prayers ?*

Ans. 1. From God. 2. From our selves that pray.

First, *From God.* 1. He sees that in our Prayers that we cannot see our selves : He sees sin, where we see none ; he hath a quick eye to look into the *obliquities* and *iniquities* of our Prayers. A little blemish is seen in the face ; so if there be but any blot or spot upon the face of the duty, his pure eyes spies it out, *Psal. 44. 20, 21.* there is not the least mote but he takes notice of,

not the *least* spot but his eye is upon; and that wherein we think we *do well*, he knows to be *evil*. *James* and *John* thought they did well, in desiring that they might do as *Elias* did, to call for fire from heaven to consume those that would not receive their Master and ours: but what sayes he to them? *Ye know not what spirit you are of*: He saw that that they thought *zeal*, to be *wild-fire*; he knew that that which they judged to come from love to their dear Master, was but a spark of their own kindling, and no love in the bottom of it, neither to Christ nor themselves, much less to those men that they wished so ill to. And may not Believers be justly afraid that God will be angry with such Prayers?

2. He hath been angry with the Prayers of others, and long angry, *Psal. 80. 4.* and therefore they fear he may be angry with their prayers. When Princes are angry with some that sue to them, others are afraid that they may be angry with their suits also: so it is in this case between God and us. If a father be angry with some of his Children, he may be angry upon the like grounds with the rest: so may God, and that may make the rest to fear that he may be angry with them.

3. He withdraws himself sometimes from his people when they pray to him, *Lam. 3. 8, 44.* and thats a ground of his being angry at their prayers;  
and

and this makes them afraid that he is angry with them. *Job* complained of this; *Job* 30.20. *I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me: I stand up, and thou regardest me not.* When a Prince withdraws from a Suppliant, and regards him not, it is a sign of his anger, and he fears he is displeased with him: so it is in this case between God and us.

4. He sees that we too often restrain prayer before him, and thereby cast off fear, *Job* 15.4. and that makes him angry: and when we consider of it, that makes us afraid that he is angry with our Prayers that we are so slack in. *Solomon* sayes, *As vineger to the teeth, and smoke to the eyes, so is a slothful messenger to him that sends him.* If our Prayers, which are the Souls messengers, be slothful, and we slack our pace in them, God will be displeased, and we may well fear that he will be angry with them.

Secondly, *From our selves that pray.* 1. We sometimes distrust Gods power, and that makes him angry, and makes us afraid that he is angry with our Prayers: *Mark* 9. 22. he doubted of *Christs* power to heal his son.

2. We sometimes distrust his will, as the *Leper* did, though he did believe his power, *Mat.* 8.2. and that is a just ground of his anger, and that makes us afraid that he may be angry with our Prayers.

3. We sometimes ask *that* that God resolves he will *never* give: Thus *Moses* did, that desired God that he might go over *Jordan*, and see that good Land; which God was angry with him for, *Dent.* 3. 25, 26. Two things hindred the granting of his desire: 1. God was provoked at the Waters of Strife, and threatned he should not bring his people into that Land, *Numb.* 20. 12. 2. He appointed *Joshua* to be the man; wherein was a mystery, for he was a Type of *Iesus Christ*, that brings us into Heaven, that *Canaan* was a Type of. Now for *Moses* to desire *that*, that God upon such just grounds denied, it could not but displease him, and make him angry: and so may we well fear that God will be angry with our Prayers, when we desire that of him that he is resolved not to give us.

4. We desire that sometimes that is not good for us, and that will make God angry with our Prayers; for no good thing he will withhold from us, *Psal.* 14. 11. and 34. 10. but if we ask any thing that is not good for us, and he sees it will hurt us, rather then do us good, he will be angry with our Prayers. Thus for *Jonah* to desire once and again that God would take away his life from him, *Jonah* 4. 3, 8. which could not be good for him, could not but displease him: and when we ask that which is not good for us, we have ground to fear that he will be angry with our Prayers.

5. We

5. We sometimes desire *that* that will be *hurtfull to others*; as it would have been to the *Ninevites*, if *Jonah* had had *that* that he desired, for then they had all been destroyed. So *James* and *John*, if they had had their desire, what would have become of those *non-entertainers of Christ*? *Luke 9.* and if we do so, and desire *the hurt of others*, may we not justly be afraid that God will be angry with our Prayers?

6. They sometimes desire *that* that may be *satisfaction to their own lusts*, as *Jonah* desired *Ninevehs destruction*, rather than that they should be *spared* upon their repentance, because *his Credit lay at the stake*, having denounced the overthrow of it *within forty dayes*. Here the *lust of Pride* was too predominant in the good Prophet, *Jonah 4. 1.* and can we wonder that God should be angry with such Prayers? Pride stepping in to such a *duty*, marres the *duty*, and makes God angry. Thus many will pray against such and such men, wherein they vent their *pride and passion*, and how can God be pleased with such Prayers? they may well fear he will be angry with them. If a man should be proud before a Prince, when he comes to Petition to him, would not the Prince be angry with such Petitions? So here.

*Use 1. for Information.* 1. We see that there is no cause for us to *glory in our prayers* that we bring



bring before the Lord; for if we look seriously into them, we may see cause to fear that God may justly be angry with them: or if we our selves should not see such cause, yet Gods pure eye cannot but see enough in the best Prayers we make, for which he may be displeased with us. There would be no standing, if he should mark what we do amiss when we pray to him, Ps. 130. 3. there will be some blot cleaving to the best service we present him; the best fire will bring some smoke and soot; and when our Prayers are most fervent with the fire of the Spirit, they have some defilement, like soot and smoke, that comes from it.

2. We see how *humble* we should be, and how *low* we should lye before the Lord, both before we pray, and in prayer, and after we have done the duty, for we may well fear that something may come, or hath come from us, for which God may be angry with our Prayers; and when God hath any occasion given him to be angry, we have cause to fall down humbly before him. When a King is justly angry, the Subject stoops, and abaseth himself; if a Father be angry, all the Children carry themselves submissively: so should we. It is said of Henry the Eighth, King of England, That when he was angry (as he often was) the chief Peers of his Kingdome would stoop humbly to him; how much more should we stoop humbly

*humbly* to the Lord when he is angry at our Prayers, who is *the great King over all the earth?*

3. We see the truth of that, *Rom. 7. 21. When I would do good, evil is present with me.* When we go to pray, it is *good that we do*, and a *commanded duty*; but even then *evil is present with us*, and we have cause to fear that something *may or hath broken from us* in the duty, for which God may be angry with us. When a man thinks to go a *right step*, he takes a *wry step*, that makes him stumble and fall: when a man would give a *right stroke*, his instrument sometimes *slips*, and the *stroke is wrong*: when a man would make *good musick*, a *String* breaks, or a *Pegge* slips, and makes an *harsh sound*. So it is when we pray, and would tread right in the duty, and strike a right stroke, and make a pleasant sound like melody in the Lords ears, then we tread awry, and strike amiss, and make such an *harsh sound*, that God is not delighted, but angry with our Prayers.

4. We see that if we be afraid that God may be angry with our Prayers, what cause then have we to fear that he will be angry with us for our *other sins* that we do too often provoke him with? If he hath so much against us for our *duties*, Oh what hath he then against us for our *other evils* in *thought, word and deed*, whereby he is displeased! we should be afraid that he will  
be

be angry for these. If he will be angry with *my steps and trips*, Oh how angry will he be for *deep falls*, and *great provocations*; if for *spots* we may fear his displeasure, how much more for *fouler sins*? A Schoolmaster, if he see a Scholars *blots* in writing, he will be angry; but if he see him *blurre* and *blot* his *hands* and *face*, and *foul* his *clothes*, he will be much more angry: So we have cause to be afraid of his anger for *grosser evils*, if he be angry at our Prayers.

5. We see what cause we have to breathe after *an immortal estate in glory*, where neither we nor any of our services shall have any *blot* or *spot* upon us or them. Here we are afraid that God may be angry at our Prayers, and that he may see just cause for it, our best duties being *defiled*; but when we come in Heaven, there will be no *blot* cleave to any of our services, we shall give him no cause to be angry, nor shall we fear his anger to be expressed toward us. Here in our best duties *we sin*, our beauty is *stained*, our face gathers *blackness*, we have something of *Ethiopian hue*, some *spots* and *specks* are upon us, some *wrinkles* of the *old man* appear in the face of the best of our *performances*: but in Heaven we shall be faultless, *Jude* ver. 4. *without spot or wrinkle*, or any such thing, *Eph. 5.27.* nothing shall then be seen upon us like a *spot*, or like a *wrinkle*, all our *imperfections* will then be done away,

away, there shall not be a *wemme* in our garment, not a *blemish* in our face, not a *speck* in our services, not any *blot* cleaving to our hearts and hands: there will be no *deformity*, no *infirmity*, no *scar*, no *scurf*, no *mole*, nor any the least *defilement* shewing it self; but we shall be all *glorious within* and *without*, all *fair* in respect of *Sanctification*, as well as of *Justification*, all over *bespangled* and *bedecked* with those *rich* and *royall* *graces* of the Spirit as becomes such a place, and such company as we shall ever be with: then never a *frown* will appear in his face, never a *lowring look* in his countenance, never a *wrinkled brow* shew it self, but all *smiles*, and *kisses*, and *heartly embraces*, and *amiable aspects* of his *favour* and *acceptance* of what we perform to him; and who would not long for such a day and such a time as this will be? it will be the *happiest day* that ever our eyes saw, the *sweetest time* that ever we could desire, the *joy of our hearts*, the *Crown of our Glory*, the *Light of our Life*, the *Confluence of all our Comforts*, the *Haven of our Desires*, after our *tossings with tempest* here, the *bright Sun-shine* after our *rain*, and *storms*, and *mists of darkness* here. When Paul and his company were tossed in the *Adriatick Sea*, and no small tempest lay upon them, *neither Sun nor Stars* appearing for many dayes, and no hope left that they should be saved, it's said, that they wished  
for

for the day, Acts 27. 20, 29. So after all our troubles and tossings here, we should wish for this day, wherein we shall see the face of God, and shall never see him angry with us any more. This is a desireable day indeed.

6. We see that if we be afraid that God will be angry with our Prayers here, then how may they be afraid of that anger of his that will cast them into the bottomless pit for ever? how should such be afraid of the wrath to come? Gods anger burns hot here; but Oh how will it burn in Hell? it's inconceivable, unutterable, we are not able to think what his anger will there be. Moses, in Psal. 90. 11. challengeth any to tell what this anger is; *Who knoweth the power of thine anger?* even when he finites his people here, the power of his anger is not known: Oh but if so, who is able to tell what it is in another world? who can tell how hot Hell is? and what that Breath is, that like a stream of brimstone kindles the fire of it?

7. We see what need we have to get Christ to bear the iniquities of our holy things, as Aaron did in type of old: for the best of us may be afraid that God may be angry with our Prayers. Our holy things, even our pure prayers, have something cleaving to them, that we may justly fear God is displeased with, and therefore great need we have of that great High Priest to bear (as all  
our



our other sins, so) *the iniquities of our holy things,* even of the holiest Prayers that at any time we offer up to God. He is that *Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world,* Joh. 1. 29. and in him, as our persons, Eph. 1. 6. so our *spirituall sacrifices are acceptable to God,* 1 Pet. 2. 5.

8. We see that if we may be afraid that God will be angry with our Prayers, then may we much more be afraid that he will be angry when we *restrain prayer before him.* Some godly ones in temptation pray not, neither in their *Families,* nor in their *Closets,* and they dare not, as they think, come before the Lord in *that duty,* they are afraid to look him in the face: but this is their sin, and such had need be humbled for it, for God will be angry at it, and they will have cause to *blush* that they should deal so with God, as not to call upon his Name.

Use 2. for Terror to all those that are wicked, and go on in a way of wickedness: If God be angry with the Prayers of his, and they are justly afraid he may so be; how angry will he be with the workers of iniquity? he is angry with them every day, Psal. 7. 11, 12, 13. If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bowe, and made it ready: He hath prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordained his arrows against the persecutors. God is so angry with them, that all his weapons of destruction are in a readiness to destroy

destroy them *speedily, dreadfully, and without remedy.*

*Use 3. for Humiliation,* that we should give the Lord any cause to be angry with our Prayers, and our selves cause to fear that so it is. An *ingenuous Childe* will be troubled at his Fathers anger; and so should we, that we give our Father cause to be angry at our Prayers, and that we have cause to fear that we have (as in other things, so) in *that duty* provoked his displeasure against us. This should lay us *low* before him.

*Use 4. for Exhortation:* 1. To be *watchful in this duty*, that God may not be angry with our Prayers. Watchfulness must ever be a *companion* to Prayer, *Coloss. 4. 2. 1 Pet. 4. 7.* To be sure the *enemy will watch* when we are at the duty, and throw in something that is *either evil, or not good at that time*, as *Hushai* said of *Achitophels* counsel, *2 Sam. 17. 7.* and our own hearts yield store of *evil thoughts*, which *flie-blow* the duty; and if we watch not against these, God will be angry, and we have cause to fear that it will be no better with us.

2. To *meditate much of Christs Intercession*, for he it is that offers *his Incense with the prayers of all Saints*, and mingles *his* with *ours*, to perfume and sweeten them, and make them *acceptable*, so as God will not be angry with them.

Christs

Christs Intercession makes our Prayers so welcome, that they are *pleasant in his sight*, and he cannot be displeased with them.

3. To be angry with *our selves*, that we have any cause to fear that God may be angry at our Prayers, for he is not angry for *nothing*, he does not without *cause* what he does, *Ezek. 14. 23.* wherein he does express his anger towards us. Such *holy fire* therefore would be *pleasing to God*, and be a fruit of *true Repentance*, 2 Cor. 7. 11.

4. To call upon us to be *thankful* when he does not express any *tokens of his displeasure* at our Prayers; for we our selves fear that we give him cause to be angry at them. If therefore he manifest no such thing, but the contrary, *viz. That he is well-pleased in Christ with them*, Cant. 2. 14. Oh what cause have we to be for ever thankful?

**V**VE now come to the *second part* of the Note, and that is this:

*That Believers desire of God that he would not be angry with them when they pray to him.*

So did Abraham here, *Let not the Lord be angry*: So Gideon, *Judg. 6. 39. Let not thine anger be kindled against me.* When we make Supplication to a Prince, we desire this, that we may have the *smiles of his face*, and that he may not be angry with

with us : So do Believers when they make Supplication to the Lord, they do and ought to desire that he would not be angry with them.

*Reasons.* 1. From the Petitioners themselves. 2. From the nature of his anger.

First, *From the Petitioners.* 1. They desire the acceptance of their Prayers, and that they may be sweet and pleasing to him ; which they could not be, if God should be angry with them. Psal. 141. 2. *Let my prayer come before thee as Incense,* Psal. 10. 14.

2. They would be *Princes with God*, and prevail with him, as it is said of *Jacob*, Gen. 32. 28. and this cannot be, if God be angry with them. A Prince will not be prevailed with, if he be angry with him that puts up his suit to him : So we shall never prevail with God, if he be angry with us when we pray to him.

3. They see some just cause why he might be angry with them, if he should be strict with them, there are so many spots in the duty, and these they earnestly desire that he would not take notice of to be angry with them, Psal. 130. 3.

4. They are afraid that they are too bold with him, and therefore desire that he would not be angry with them. So *Abraham* does here. When we sue to men for some special favour, we desire pardon for our boldness, as fearing that we may offend by it : so do they that make suit to the Lord.

5. They

5. They are *conscious* of their own integrity in the main, though they may have their failings, *Psal. 44. 17, 18.* and therefore desire that he would not be angry with them.

6. They *expostulate* with him in an *humble way*, about his anger with their Prayers, *Psal. 80. 4.* which shews that they see cause to desire of God that he would not be angry with them: for such an *expostulation* contains the force of an *earnest prayer*, that he would withdraw his anger from them.

Secondly, *From the nature of his Anger.*  
1. It is like *fire*, and therefore Gideon expresseth it, *Judg. 6. 39. Let not thine anger be hot against me.* Gods anger is as *hot as fire*; and therefore in *Deut. 32. 22.* it is said, *A fire is kindled in mine anger, that shall burn to the lowest hell.* Now being of such a *fiery nature*, it is not to be marvelled at that they pray that God would not be angry with them.

2. It is like the *dreadful waves of the Sea*, *Mic. 7. 9. I will bear the indignation of the Lord:* The word translated *indignation*, signifies such a raging as is in the *raging waves of the Sea* when they are lifted up on high, and threaten drowning and overwhelming; and therefore *Jonah 1. 15.* the same word is used for the *raging of the Sea* in a sore storm and tempest; and when the *Sea rageth* and is *tempestuous*, the Mariners earnestly



neſtly deſire a Calm, and that they might be quiet, and the Sea might ceaſe from her raging. So Believers deſire of God, that the *dreadful waves of the Sea of his anger* may ceaſe, and that they may enjoy a quiet Calm.

3. It is compared to *ſmoke*, Dent. 29. 20. Pſal. 74. 1. and *ſmoke* is a *ſtiſling thing*, if it be in the extremity of it, and cannot be endured: and as men get out of a ſmoky houſe or room, as not being able to bear it, and deſire to be as farre from it as may be; ſo Believers deſire of God that the *ſmoke of his anger* may be removed from them.

4. It is ſet out to us under the notion of *red wine* that is *full of mixture* of that which doth *intoxicate*, Pſal. 75. 8. and is *without mixture* of any thing that ſhould *allay*, and make it better to be endured, Rev. 14. 9, 10. ſo thoſe *two places* are reconciled. Now who would not deſire to be freed from ſuch a Cup of wine, that is ſo *full of mixture* to *intoxicate* and *kill*, and is *without mixture* of that that ſhould *allay*, and take away the *ſharpneſs* and *deadly ſtrength* of it? Such a Cup of wine is *Gods anger*, and therefore Believers may well pray that he would not be angry with them.

5. It is compared to *wormwood* and *gall*, Lam. 3. 15, 19. both which are *bitter things*; and the anger of God is *that* that makes affliction ſo bitter.

Now

Now wormwood and gall are such things as every one would decline: Oh then much more will the Saints decline the anger of God, and pray that he would not be angry with them when they pray to him.

6. It is held out under the notion of a Bear robbed of her whelps, and of a Lion and Leopard, Hof. 13. 7, 8. and these are fierce and tearing Creatures. When God is angry, he compares himself to such Creatures as are fierce, and deadly rending and tearing in pieces what they meet with: Now who would not desire to be delivered from a Lion, and Bear robbed of her whelps, and from a Leopard that watcheth to destroy? and if the Lords anger be like the fierceness of these Beasts of Prey, there is great reason that Believers should pray that he would not be angry with them.

Use 1. for Information. 1. We see that the anger of the Lord is a dreadful thing, for else Believers would not so pray to be delivered from it. If the Kings wrath be as the roaring of a Lion, Prov. 19. 12. and as the messengers of death, Prov. 16. 14. and whose provoketh him to anger, sinneth against his own soul, Prov. 20. 2. Oh what is it then when God is angry? Nahum 1. 6. Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? His fury is poured out like fire, and the Rocks are thrown down by him.

him. Men make nothing of it to provoke him, but they shall know what his anger means, and what it is to stirre up this *Lion*, that will so roar, and rent, and tear, and kill, and devour: they shall finde it a dreadful anger, farre above any Kings anger, whoever he be.

2. We see the wofull estate of those upon whom the wrath of God must abide for ever, Joh. 3.36. If Abraham prayed so that God would not be angry with him, surely they are in an ill case that must abide by it to all eternity: and who is able to undergo the severity of his displeasure? If his wrath be kindled but a little, there's no enduring of it; Oh how shall they then be able to endure it, in the extremity of it to all eternity? It's an hot hole where the Bellows blow in a furnace of Iron or Copper; Oh but what an hot hole is Hell then, which the breath and anger of the Lord, like a stream of Brimstone, kindleth for ever?

3. We see what a mercy it is to be delivered from the heat of his anger; for Believers pray that God would not be angry with them: surely therefore it is a mercy when such a shower falls not upon us, when this wrath is not poured upon us like fire, for there's no fire burns so hot as that; and this deliverance is by our Redeemer, Rom. 5.9. Being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. He quencheth this fire, and  
puts

puts out all the *sparks* of it: He dries up this *Sea*, and stills all the *raging* of it: He hath himself drunk that *Cup of Red Wine* full of mixture of that that killed, and without mixture of what might allay it, that we might never drink it.

4. We see what *love* we owe to Christ Jesus, that delivereth us from the *wrath to come*, 1 Thess. 1. 10. Oh, who should have our hearts but he? where should our love be laid out, but upon him? We would love one that plucked us out of the fire, that pulled us out of the *Lions mouth*, that got us out of the *paw of the Bear*, that rescued us from the *Leopards teeth and claws*: and if so, what love is he worthy of, that hath plucked us out of the *fire of Gods anger*? and when it hath roared upon us like a *Lion*, and hath watched over us as the *Leopard* to make a prey of us, then he hath stood up to *rescue us*: No love ever like his herein, and no love should be above ours to him back again.

5. We see that his favour must needs be very sweet, if his anger be that that is to be prayed against. Life is sweet, and in his favour is life, Psal. 30. 5. yea better then life, Psal. 63. 3. This life is sweet, but his favour is above it; there's no sweetness to be equalled or compared with it. The favour of a Prince is as the dew upon the grass, Prov. 19. 12. which makes it revive and flourish in its greenness and beauty; Oh what

then is the favour of God? it must needs make us grow and flourish in viridity and greenness. If his anger be that we are to desire to be delivered from, then his favour is that that we are to be delighted in, and is to be desired after.

6. We see that they that provoke God to anger are the greatest enemies to themselves; for Believers, that are their own friends, pray that the Lord would not be angry with them. If he that provoketh a Prince, sinneth against his own soul, Prov. 20. 2. how do they sin against their own souls that provoke God to anger? There are no such enemies to themselves as such men be. And truly we have so many enemies abroad, that we had not need be our own enemies.

Use 2. for Terrorour to those that are to bear this anger for ever. Godly men are so afraid of kindling this fire, that they pray against it, as Abraham here does: Oh! but how will they do that are to suffer it to all eternity? If it be better to dwell in a corner of the house, then with an angry woman in a wide house; Oh how will they do that are to endure Gods anger? If a continuall dropping in a very rainy day, and an angry woman be alike, that will wear a man if he were a stone; Oh how will they endure the anger of God, that is not to be dropped, but poured out upon them for ever and ever? Job, when he felt but a few drops of this, cried out, *Is my strength the strength*



strength of stones? or is my flesh of brass? Job 6.12. Oh what stones and brass had they need be that are to bear his anger to all eternity?

Use 3. for Humiliation to the Saints that are not so afraid of displeasing him, and do not so pray as they ought that God would not be angry with them: these forget Abraham their father, and what a gracious spirit he was of.

Use 4. for Exhortation: 1. To pray that God would not be angry with us when we pray to him, but that (as at other times, so) then we may have the smiles of his face, and the light of his countenance lifted up upon us, Psal. 119. 135.

2. To do nothing when we come to pray before him that may provoke him. Take heed of all Prayer-sins: 1. Of unwashen hands and hearts, Jam. 4.8. 1 Tim. 2.8. 2. Of Irreverence, Psal. 89. 7. 3. Wrath, 1 Tim. 2.8. 4. Doubting, ibid. Jam. 1.6, 7. 5. Vain thoughts, wandering imaginations, unfixed hearts, Psal. 108. 1. 6. Drowsiness, Mat. 26. 40, 41. 7. Of unpreparedness to the duty, Psal. 10. 17.

3. To please him when we pray to him. Q. How? A. 1. By praying in faith, Mat. 21. 22. 2. In love to those we pray for: so Abraham did. 4. In humility, Luke 7. 7, 8. & 15. 18, 19. 3. In fervency, Jam. 5. 16.

4. To long to be with him, when we shall never displease him more.

3. To

5. To be thankfull when he accepts them, Psal. 86.

6. To love him, when he is pleased with us and them.

Verse 30. And he said unto him, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak, &c.

Doct. XX. **T**Hat Believers, when they have prayed that he would not be angry with them, are encouraged to speak more in prayer to him.

So Abraham here sayes, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak. Petitioners to Princes when they are not angry, are encouraged to speak in way of suit to them: so may we be encouraged to speak to the Lord, when we have desired that he would not be angry with us.

Reasons. 1. From the Lords anger. 2. From the Believers themselves. 3. From their Prayers.

First, From the Lords anger. 1. If it should kindle against us, there would be no speaking to him. There's no wise man that would Petition to a Prince when he is angry with him; but if he be calm, and his spirit be appeased, and no anger appear in his face, or in his words or gesture, he will then be encouraged to speak, and bring his Petition before him: So if God be angry

angry there is no speaking to him, but if he be appeased toward us, then we may freely speak what we have to say to him, as *Abraham* here does.

2. His anger is a *fierce anger*, Nah. 1. 6. and that must needs stop any mans mouth from speaking. If a man be *fierce in his anger*, it is in vain to speak to him : so here. But if he be persuaded to lay aside his fierceness, then he may be spoken to : so it is with us in speaking to the Lord.

3. His anger is such that *none can stand before it*, Nah. 1. 6. and therefore there is no speaking in way of suit till it be removed : but when this is gone, then we may have free access to him, and speak what we will in his ears.

4. His anger is as a *Cloud that he covers himself with*, Lam. 3. 44. that our prayers cannot pass thorow, and therefore so long as that cloud remains, there's no speaking in Prayer to him : but when it is taken away, then our Prayers may come before him, and be accepted.

5. His anger is *long ere it be removed*, Pl. 89. 4. God is *slow to anger*, not easily provoked, but when once he is angry, he is not quickly pacified, and that will hinder our Prayers : but now when this is removed, then we may speak as *Abraham* here does.

6. His anger is an *unknown anger*, Psal. 90. 11. we may know other things, but we do not know the

the force of this, and being so powerful, it will stop our monthes: but if this be removed, then we may speak all our minde.

Secondly, *From Believers.* 1. They may prevail with God for any thing, Matth. 21. 22. and therefore may well be encouraged to speak to him when he is not angry with them: he cannot say them nay in what they sue for.

2. They are his friends, Jam. 2. 23. and friends may speak freely to God, especially when they have prayed to him that he would not be angry with them.

3. They are his favourites, they finde grace in his sight, as it is said of Moses, Exod. 33. 12. and they may speak what they will in the ears of their Prince.

4. They are the Sons of God, Joh. 1. 12. and they may be bold to ask any thing of their Father, especially when he is not angry with them.

5. They are his jewels, Mal. 3. 17. his peculiar Treasure, Psal. 135. 4. and they that are so precious to him, may be encouraged to speak to him.

6. They are they that he hath given his own Son Christ unto, Rom. 8. 32. and therefore they may speak; and have any thing given to them.

Thirdly, *From their Prayers.* 1. They are put up to him who is a God hearing prayer, Pl. 65. 2.

2. They are made to him that commands us to ask, Mat. 7. 7.

3. They

3. They are brought before him, who (*Psal.* 81. 10.) bids us *open our mouthes wide, &c.*

4. They are directed to him who is *God All-sufficient, that can do every thing,* *Jer.* 32. 17, 27. *Job* 42. 2.

5. They are *delightful to him,* *Prov.* 15. 8.

6. They are *mingled with Christs intercession,* *Rev.* 8. 3. and *accepted in him,* *1 Pet.* 2. 5. All which considered, they may be *encouraged to speak and pray to him.*

*Use 1. for Information.* 1. We see what cause we have to *look to it,* that God be not *provoked by us* when we go to pray to him; for if he be, we shall not be able to *speak to any purpose* in his ears.

2. We see that they that come to a *reconciled God,* may speak their mindes freely to him.

3. We see that if *God be angry,* there's no speaking to him.

4. We see that *wicked men* cannot speak in Prayer to God, *with whom he is angry every day,* *Psal.* 7. 11.

5. We see that they are *happy* that have Gods anger *turned from them,* as *Hos.* 14. 4. for such may be *encouraged to speak* as *Abraham* here did.

6. We see that there's *no going to an angry God.* What can any man look for from an angry Prince?

7. We see how *precious* Christ should be to us, *1 Pet.* 2. 7. who makes us and our prayers *acceptable*



*acceptable to God, Ephes. 1. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 5.*

8. We see that if we would go with *courage* to pray before the Lord, we must first *prevail with him* not to be angry with us.

9. We see that as there is *enough* in Gods anger to stop any mans mouth in Prayer; so when he is *appeased*, there's *enough* in that to open any mans mouth to pray to him.

10. We see that none but those that have *interest* in Christs reconciling grace, can make an effectuall Prayer.

*Use 2. for Terreur* to those that anger God with their sins.

*Use 3. for Humiliation* to those that too often give God cause to be angry with them, as 2 Sam. 11. 27. 1 Kings 11. 9.

*Use 4. for Exhortation*: 1. To get God reconciled. 2. To pray for others that do *provoke* him. 3. To bless God for Christ. 4. To love Christ. 5. To long for Heaven. 6. To speak as *Abraham* does.

Verse 30. — *Peradventure there shall thirty be found there.*

Doct. XXI. **T**hat Believers in every request that they make to God, desire to get something more from God then formerly they have received.

*Abraham*

*Abraham* desired before, That if there were forty Righteous found in Sodom, that the City might be spared; and he had his desire in that given to him: and now he prayes again, he desires to get something more, That if there be thirty found there, the rest might be spared for their sakes.

*Reasons.* 1. From the Lord. 2. From the Believers themselves. 3. From the Prayers they put up to him.

First, *From the Lord.* 1. He hath enough by him to give us more when we ask of him, and therefore we may well desire to get something more from him: He is a full one, and can fulfill the desires of them that fear him, Psal. 145. 19. and if he would not have us send the poor away empty from us, when we have it by us, Prov. 3. 27, 28. then we may well desire to get something more from such an one, that hath enough by him to give to us.

2. He is a bountiful one, Rich unto all that call upon him, Rom. 10. 12. and therefore in every request that we put up to him, we may desire something more from him. Petitioners that sue to bountiful Princes, may expect more from them, when-ever they come before them: So we, when we come before the Lord, he sends none empty away.

3. He calls upon us to open our mouths wide,

to enlarge our desires, to ask much of him, *Psal.* 81. 10. and therefore we may well desire to get *something more of him*, as often as we come.

4. He *loves his people*, *Deut.* 33. 3. *Psal.* 146. 8. and they that *love others*, are willing to give more and more to them at their asking; and therefore such as come to them, may well desire to get *something more of them* then formerly they have had: So may we of the Lord.

5. He *gives to all liberally*, and *upbraideth not* when we *ask in faith*, *Jam.* 5. 6. and therefore in every request that we put up to him, we may desire *something more* then formerly we have received of him.

6. He *Rewards bounty in us abundantly*, *Luke* 6. 38. and therefore we may well desire to receive bountifully of him, and to desire that we may have *something more of him* in every request that we put up to him.

Secondly, *From the Believers themselves:*

1. They are of *a noble spirit themselves*, as *Abraham*, *Gen.* 14. 22, 23, 24. so *Arannah*, *2 Sam.* 24. 23. and if they be so *royal in giving*, then Believers may well look that God should be *more Royall*, and desire more of him.

2. They have *large promises made to them*, *Psal.* 81. 10. *Joh.* 16. 23. and having such *promises*, they may desire when-ever they pray to him, to get *something more of him* then formerly they have received.

3. They

3. They are *the desire of his eyes*, and the *re-  
vishment of his heart*, Cant. 2. 14. & 4. 9. and  
they that are such, may in every request they  
make desire *something more* of him then formerly.

4. They are *his excellent ones*, Psal. 16. 3. and  
though they look at themselves as *vile*, yet they  
are more *precious* and *excellent* in his eyes for  
that, and may desire to get *something more* of  
him. The more *little* we are in our own eyes,  
the more *esteem* we are of in his.

5. They are such as are *purchased by his Sons  
Blood*, Acts 20. 28. and what may they not de-  
sire in their requests of him?

6. They are *lovers of him*, Psal. 69. 36. and  
what may not they desire of him? they may  
desire in all their requests to get *something more*  
of him then formerly.

Thirdly, *From their Prayers they put up:*

1. They are *Odours*, Rev. 5. 8. of a sweet flavour  
to him through Christ.

2. They are *pure prayers*, Job 16. 17. and of-  
fered up with *holy hands and hearts*, Jam. 4. 8.

3. They are *humble Prayers*, as *Abraham's*  
was here, Luke 15. 21. & 18. 13.

4. They are *unfeigned desires and Prayers*,  
Psal. 17. 1.

5. They are *fervent Prayers*, Jam. 5. 16, 17.  
there's *fire* in them.

6. They are *inwrought Prayers*, *ibid.* the  
R heart

heart is in them: and being such Prayers, no wonder if Believers in every request that they make desire to get *something more* then formerly they have had from the Lord.

*Use 1. for Information.* 1. We see how in an holy wise *bold* Believers are with the Lord, that desire *something more* in every request that they put up, then formerly they have received. It would be so with men, and is so in our suits we make to God.

2. We see that *stinted* Prayers enjoyed, and no other then such to be used, fall short of being Prayers of Faith, for they ask for the same things, and for no more then the *Book* sets down, which have been asked a thousand times over; not but that some requests may be the same, if some *new ones* be put in with them, for Christ said *the same words* sometimes in praying as well as in Preaching.

3. We see that Faith looks at God as a *bountiful and liberal giver*, Jam. 1. 5, 6.

4. We see that Believers think they can never receive *enough* from the Lord.

5. We see that the best of men are *indigent men*, and stand in need of more and more supplies from the Lord. We are all of the *craving band* here.

6. We see what *longings* we should have here, for the enjoyment of God in heaven, where we shall



shall be at the *well-head*, and never desiring more; for here we are *alwayes desiring more.*

7. We see what a *full one* God is that we make our requests unto, *Rom. 10. 12. Joh. 1. 16.*

8. We see the *excellency* of Believers above other men, they have *larger desires* then others: other men though they *have not*, yet they *ask not.*

9. We see that God hath never the *less* for all that we have of him; for, *faith still desires more.*

10. We see that Believers (though *bountiful*) yet are *covetous in an holy way*, they *desire more.*

*Use 2. for Terror*, to those that *have nothing*, and *ask nothing.*

*Use 3. for Humiliation* to those that do not, as *Psal. 81. 10.*

*Use 4. for Exhortation*: 1. To walk in the steps of *Abrahams faith.* 2. To get something more in every Prayer. 3. To long to be at the *Fountain.* 4. To love him that is so *full.* 5. To go often to him. 6. To pray here with heart-prayers.

Verse 30. — Peradventure there shall thirty be found there: And he said, I will not do it if I finde thirty there.

Doct. XXII. **T**Hat what requests Believers put up to the Lord, wherein they desire to get more from him, he will give in to them, they shall have more still granted to them.

*Abraham*, that had obtained for *forty*, now findes that if there were but *thirty* found in *Sodom*, God would not destroy it for *their sakes*.

*Reasons.* 1. From the Lord. 2. From Believers. 3. From the Requests they put up.

First, *From the Lord.* 1. He is *Abundant in goodness*, *Exod. 34. 6.* and scatters plentifully to those that desire to share in his bounty; as *Boaz* did to *Ruth* that came to *glean in his field*, *Ruth 2. 15, 16.* So doth the Lord, when we desire to *gain of him*, and get *something more of him* than formerly; he is so *abundant in goodness*, that he will let *handfulls fall on purpose* for us; if we desire more we shall have more from him.

2. As he is *abundant in goodness*, so he does not *grudge to give more to us*, when we desire it of him. Men sometimes will *grudge to give to them that they have been bountiful to before*, if they should ask more; but the Lord is so *free*, that though we ask more, he will not *grudge to give it in to us*: He that would have us in our *bounty to do it without grudging*, *1 Pet. 4. 9.* will much more do it himself.

3. He *loves a chearful giver*, *2 Cor. 9. 7.* in our bounty he likes it, that it should not be *grudgingly*, or of *necessity*, when we can do no otherwise for very shame, but that we should come off with it with *delight*, *cheerfully* and *gladly*: Oh how *cheerfully* will he then come off to us

us in his bounty? if we desire more, we shall have more of him.

4. He *abhors a covetous spirit* in men, *Psal.* 10. 3. and if so, he must needs give liberally himself; so that if we will have more, we shall have more.

5. He hath given the greatest gift to us, that ever he gave to the Sons of men, and therefore he will not stick at other requests, *Rom.* 8. 32.

6. He is *never weary of doing good* to his servants that sue to him: we may *weary men* this way, because they either cannot spare what we desire, or have not a will to it; but we cannot weary him, because he is both able and willing to give in more to us, according to our desires.

Secondly, *From the Believers.* 1. They are such as *please him*, and what may not they have of him? 1 *Joh.* 3. 22. they may have more at their desire.

2. They are *his friends*, (as I said before) *Jam.* 4. 23. and they may have more given in to them at their desire from men; much more from the Lord.

3. They are *his precious ones*. Faith is a *precious grace*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 1. and they are *precious ones* that partake in it; and therefore he will not stick at giving them more at their desire.

4. They are *they* to whom all things are possible, *Mark* 9. 23. and therefore he will not deny

them any thing; if they desire more, they shall have more.

5. They are *they* that do glorifie God, Rom. 4. 20. and he will not deny to give more to them that give glory to him.

6. They are *such* as he hath promised to give all things to, Mat. 21. 22. Joh. 15. 7.

Thirdly, *From the Requests they put up:*

1. They are *feruent*, and (Jam. 5. 16.) that avail-eth much.

2. They are *humble*, and (Psal. 10. 16.) God bears such.

3. They are *hearty*, Psal. 25. 1. and such requests ever speed.

4. They are *sincere*, Psal. 17. 1. and such requests never miscarry.

5. They are put up in *Christ's Name*, Joh. 16. 23. and such requests he will grant.

6. They are *without ceasing*, 1 Thess. 5. 17. Luke 18. 1. and such requests are ever heard.

*Use 1. for Information.* 1. We see that we go to a God that is a *bountifull giver*, for in every request that we put up to him, we shall have more given in to us then we received before.

2. We see what encouragement we have to pray in faith, for never a time that we come to sue, but we shall get *something more* then we had before.

3. We see that Faith is highly prized of the Lord,

Lord, it makes an *addition* to what God hath formerly granted to us.

4. We see that the *richer we are in faith*, the more rich we shall be in what we desire of God; he will *adde something more* to what we have had of him.

5. We see that they that are *most fervent* in offering up Prayer to God, are sure to have *most granted* to them.

6. We see what *high esteem* we should have of true Believers, they never go to God but they get more of him.

7. We see what *loads* we shall have when we come to heaven.

8. We see how *loathsome to God* they be, that will give *nothing to him* of what he hath given to them, *Prov. 3.*

9. We see that they that are *penurious* and *niggardly* in upholding his Ordinances, are unlike God, who gives like himself.

10. We see what *praise is due to him* from every believing Suppliant.

*Use 2. for Terror to Unbelievers*, they shall get *nothing*, *Jam. 1. 6.*

*Use 3. for Humiliation*, for our *want of faith*, and *weakness of it* when we pray.

*Use 4. for Exhortation*: 1. To pray in faith, *Jam. 1. 5.* 2. To expect *something more* when we pray. 3. To honour him for his *Bounty*.



4. To love this liberal one. 5. To be liberal our selves to him and his. 6. To abhor a niggardly spirit. 7. To long to be with him.

Verse 31. *And he said, Behold, now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure theye shall twenty be found there.*

Doct. XXIII. **T**Hat they that are bold with the Lord in supplicating to him, they are not ashamed to make further bold with him.

*Abraham* said once before, that he had taken upon him to speak unto the Lord, and to be bold in Prayer; and now he makes further bold with him: he sayes it over again, *Behold, now I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord.*

*Reasons.* 1. From the Lord. 2. From our selves. 3. From the nature of Believers boldness.

First, *From the Lord.* 1. He loves to see his friends bold with him. So it is with some kinde-hearted men, they love to see their friends bold with them, and not once, but often: So does the the Lord, who is kinde to his friends, and farre more kinde then all the kinde-hearted men in the world put all together.

2. He calls upon us to come with boldness to the Throne of Grace, Heb. 4. 16. not once, but so often as we are in need; and that encourageth believing

believing Suppliants to make further bold with him.

3. He will at any time give to importunate Suiters, though they should seem to come unseasonably, yet if they be bold, and in an holy wise impudent, so as to take no nay, he will be free to give: this is held out in that Parable Luke 11. 5—8. Importunity does sometimes more then Friendship it self.

4. He is displeased when we are not bold with him; because we do not take him to be such a friend as indeed he is; for if we did so judge, we would be more bold with him, Isa. 64. 7.

5. He makes account that such cast off fear, as restrain prayer, and are not bold with him, Job 15. 4. and Believers are loth to have that imputed to them; for faith and fear go together, Heb. 11. 7.

6. He alwayes makes us the more welcome, the more bold we are with him when we pray to him. Abraham lost nothing by taking upon him to speak unto the Lord, and being further bold with him. A bold friend findes hearty welcome from men, much more from the Lord; they that sue oftenest speed the best.

Secondly, *From our selves.* 1. We sue to a God who hath said that we shall not seek his face in vain, Isa. 45. 19. and therefore may be bold with him, and make further bold.

2. We

2. We sue to him who hath given out that great word, *Isa. 45. 11. Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command me*; which none of us durst have thought of, had not he spoken it.

3. We sue to him that hath said, *Psal. 81. 10. that if we be so bold as to open our mouthes wide, and enlarge our desires, he will fill and satisfie them.*

4. We go to him who is the God of all grace, *1 Pet. 5. 10. and therefore can supply us abundantly. What cannot that God of all grace bring in to us? All grace is more then Rich grace: A man may be Rich, and yet not have All; but God is not onely Rich in grace, but the God of all grace, and therefore can make all grace to abound towards us.*

5. We sue to him who will never send us empty away, who turns none away from his doors without relief: His suiters shall never go sad away from him. He sends the rich empty away, that think they need nothing, *Luke 1. 53. but filleth the hungry with good things.*

6. We go to him that hath said, that Every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened, *Mat. 7. 8.* and therefore we may be bold, and further bold with him. We may be bold to think that he will not be harder to us then he is to every one.

Thirdly,

- Thirdly, *From the nature of Believers boldness.*  
1. It draws us nearer unto God; and that God delighteth in: we get near to the Throne of Grace.  
2. It makes a man go out of himself more, and see what need he hath of supplies from Heaven: and that's a gracious frame of heart.  
3. It lets us see our own unworthiness, Gen. 32. 10, 11. Luke 15. 21. and that God takes pleasure in.  
4. It holds up our friendship with God, and assureth us that we are his friends, in that we make so bold with him, Jam. 2. 23.  
5. It is the very Suburbs and Gate of Heaven, for they in Heaven can be holily bold with the Lord, Dan. 4. 17.  
6. It is a blessed fruit of Christs Ascension, Heb. 4. 14, 16. Upon all which grounds Believers may be bold, and further bold with him.  
*Use 1. for Information.* 1. We see what a gracious God we sue to, that we may be bold, and further bold with in our requests that we put up to him. He proclaimed his Name thus of old, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, Exod. 34. 6.  
2. We see that Believers have great interest in him, that may be so bold with him as to take upon them to speak again and again thus to him.  
3. We see that great is the friendship that is between God and Believing Souls. Great hath been

been the friendship that hath been between some men, but none like this between God and his believing ones.

4. We see that to be *bold with God*, and to be *further bold with him* in our requests that we put up to him, is an argument that God is very near to us, and we very near and dear to him.

5. We see that surely we shall be *near indeed* to him in heaven, when *faith* is turned into *vision*.

6. We see that if we make so *bold with him* here, in praying to him; Oh what *holy boldness* shall we have with him when he clasps us in his *Everlasting Arms*, and puts us into *his Bosom* to all Eternity?

7. We see that though Believers are the *modestest men* that are, yet they are the *boldest men* also; for they can *take upon them to speak to God*, and to be *further bold with him*.

8. We see that no men nor Devils shall be able to *dash them out of countenance*, for they can be *bold with God himself*.

9. We see a reason of that in *Ephes. 6. 16*. That that makes us *bold with God*, will make us *victorious* over the wicked one.

10. We see how bold we should be in a *good cause*, and for a *good conscience*, as *Peter and John, Acts 4*.

*Use 2.* for *Terrour* to Unbelievers, they cannot be bold this way, though they make *too bold with him* by sin.

*Use 3.*



*Use 3. for Humiliation to those that are not so bold with him as they may.*

*Use 4. for Exhortation: 1. To be holily bold. 2. Believe. 3. Fear him. 4. Be friends to him. 5. Apply Christs Ascension. 6. Walk with him. 7. Love Christ.*

*Vers 31. — Peradventure there shall twenty be found there.*

**Doct. XXIV.** **T***hat Believers in making suit to the Lord, improve Gods bounty and mercy all that ever they can in behalf of others that they sue for.*

*Abraham found God merciful to Sodom, that if there had been fifty Righteous within the City, he would have spared the whole place for their sakes; then afterwards if there had been five and forty; then if there had been forty; then if there had been thirty, and had a grant so far: and now having obtained so much mercy, he improves it yet further to twenty; Peradventure there shall twenty be found there: he will try yet further what the Lord will do.*

*Reasons. 1. From the Lord. 2. From the Believers themselves. 3. From their Prayers.*

*First, From the Lord. 1. He is Rich in mercy, Eph. 2.4. Rom. 10.12. and that Riches of his mercy*

mercy is inexhaustible, we cannot empty the treasure of it, nor draw the fountain of it dry, it is a Spring that is alwayes full, and therefore we may improve it all that ever we can. A rich Mine may be digged into, and a rich Treasure may be made use of, and a full Fountain drawn: So here.

2. He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think, Eph. 3. 20. and therefore we may improve it to the utmost, and ask high of him. Our desires are scant, our thoughts are narrow, to that large bounty and mercy that he can impart to us.

3. He is such a full one, that the whole earth is full of his mercy, Psal. 119. 64. and that that fills the whole earth, we may well improve for those that we pray for. We may have enough of that that the whole earth is full of.

4. His thoughts and wayes of mercy are not like our thoughts and wayes, but as the heavens are higher then the earth, so are his wayes higher then our wayes, and his thoughts then our thoughts, Isa. 55. 8, 9. Psal. 103. 11. and therefore we may well improve it to the utmost.

5. He is infinite in mercy, as well as in his other Attributes, Psal. 145. 3. & 147. 5. and therefore we may improve it what we can, and as far as our finite natures can go this way.

6. He delights in mercy, Mic. 7. 18. and that  
that

that he *delights in*, that should we delight to improve to the utmost, and he will also delight in our improvement of it, as he did all along in *Abrahams* here.

Secondly, *From the Believers themselves:*

1. They have *experience of his mercy* to themselves, and therefore improve it all they can in behalf of others. *Abraham* found the Lord *merciful to himself*, and therefore improves *mercy for others*.

2. They are of a *merciful disposition to others*. *Righteous and Merciful men* are coupled together, *Isa. 57. 1*. Now being of a *merciful disposition*, hence it is that they do improve the the Lords mercy what they can for them.

3. Believers have a *promise*, that *being merciful they shall obtain mercy*, *Mat. 5. 7*. and that themselves shall be no losers by it, and therefore may well improve the Lords mercy for others.

4. They know that it's *Gods will* that they should *love mercy*, *Mic. 6. 8*. and this way they shew their *love of mercy*, in improving Gods mercy to others.

5. They are *good stewards of the manifold grace of God*, and this way shew it, by improving the *mercy of God* in behalf of others, as well as for themselves.

6. They are *like God*, and he is *communicative*, and so are they, in improving his *mercy* as far

far as may be for the good of others. God is good, does good, Psal. 119. 68. and the further a sweet Fountain runs, the better it is.

Thirdly, *From their Prayers.* 1. They often prevail for others, as well as for Believers themselves. Abraham missed not of one of his desires for wicked Sodom.

2. Their Prayers, if they should miss for others, yet will return into their own bosomes, Psal. 35. 13.

3. Their Prayers pierce heaven, 2 Chro. 30. 27.

4. They have a kinde of sovereignty with them, Isa. 45. 11.

5. They bring the Lord to our beck, Isa. 58. 9.

6. They are never in vain, Isa. 45. 19. and is not such mercy worth the improving?

*Use 1. for Information.* 1. We see how full of love Believers are to others, that are so willing to improve the Lords mercy so farre for their good. Abraham desires mercy for Sodom, if there were but twenty righteous found amongst them. Faith and Love ever go together, lodge in the same breast, and take up together in the same heart.

2. We see that Believers are not all for themselves, but very desirous that others should partake of the Lords mercy with them. Faith is a communicative grace, and does not centre within it self, Gal. 5. 6.

3. We

3. We see how *precious* Believers should be in our eyes, for they are such as do *all they can* to make others partakers of Gods mercy, *Mal.*

3.17. Jewels communicate their beauty to others, as well as retain it within themselves.

4. We see how Believers resemble God himself, he *is good*; and *does good*, *Psal.* 119.68. and so do they.

5. We see that they that *share* in the Lords mercy themselves, are not *so content*, but would have others *partake in it* also; and therefore so desire it for them.

6. We see what *love will be in heaven*, if Believers have so much here on earth: there's *all love* there, *1 Cor.* 13.8.

7. We see that the Lords mercy is a *rich Myne and Treasure*, seeing it may be so improved, and Believers do so desire to improve it for others.

8. We see what improvement we should make of Gods mercy to our selves.

9. We see that Believers do well in *fulfilling the Royal Law*, *Jam.* 2.8.

10. We see what *longings* we should have after heaven, for then the Lords mercy will be *fully manifested*, *Jude ver.* 21.

Use 2. for *Terrour*, to those that *share not* in this mercy.

Use 3. for *Humiliation*, that we *fall short* in our duty this way. S Use 4.



Use 4. for Exhortation: 1. To evidence our Faith this way. 2. To improve his mercy for our selves. 3. To look for the mercy of Christ unto eternal life, Jude ver. 21. 4. To honour Believers. 5. To Pray, Luke 17. 5. 6. To give the Lord the glory of all his mercy.

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Verse 31. — And he said, I will not destroy it for twentys sake.

Doct. XXV. **T**Hat the Lord doth exceedingly condescend to his believing Suppliants in praying to him, and improving his mercy in behalf of others.

So does the Lord here: Abraham desires that if there be but twenty Righteous in Sodom, that he would not destroy it; and God condescends to him in his request, and sayes he will not destroy it for twentys sake.

Reasons. 1. From the Lord. 2. From his believing Suppliants. 3. From their Prayers. First, From the Lord. 1. He is a God ready to forgive, Neh. 9. 17. Psal. 86. 5. and not to inflict punishment, especially when sued unto by Believers. See Exod. 32. 11. — 14. Numb. 14.

13 — 21.

2. He prepares their hearts, and then causeth his ear to hear, Psal. 10. 17. He that gives heart-preparation,

preparation, he ever lends a listening ear.

3. He provides for the Ravens when his young ones cry unto God, Job 38.41. Psal. 147.9. and if he come down so low as to hear them, then sure he will not disdain to condescend to his believing Suppliants that sue to him in behalf of others.

4. He gives the beasts their food, ibid. and they make but an harsh sound; they some of them roar, as the Bear and Lion; and some of them bray, as the Ass; and some of them bel-low, as the Ox: and if he condescend so low as to hear such noises and voices, how much more will he come low in hearing his believing Suppliants, whoever they pray for?

5. He is a God that is merciful and gracious, Exod. 34.6. and therefore hears them in behalf of whomsoever they sue for: His Mercy and Grace makes him thus to condescend.

6. He hears sometimes farre worse then they: The Israelites murmured at the Red-sea, yet Neh. 9.9. God heard their cry there, to save them with a temporal salvation, though afterward they were destroyed in the wilderness, Jude ver. 5. and if he would hear such, much more will he condescend to hear his believing Suppliants, on whose behalf soever they sue for.

Secondly, From the Believers themselves:

1. They have much communion with him, as we see in Enoch and Noah, Gen. 5.22. & 6.9. and

God will condescend much to those.

2. They are *accepted in the beloved*, Eph. 1.6. and what is it that they may not prevail for? he will condescend much for their sakes.

3. They *please him*, Heb. 11.5. and such as so do may have any thing of him, 1 *Joh.* 3.22.

4. They *ravish his heart*, Cant. 4.9. that *one eye* of their *Faith* wins his heart; he is *taken with it*, as a Lover is with the beauty of *that eye* that he beholds, his heart is inclosed in *that eye*.

5. They are *they* that are very *dear to Christ*, Mat. 12.49, 50. & what may not *they* have of him?

6. They are such as this King *delighteth to honour*, and they may have *great things* done for them, *Joh.* 12.26. See for illustration *Esth.* 6.6, 7.

Thirdly, *From their Prayers*: 1. They are the *breathings of his Spirit*, he *endites* them, Rom. 8.26. & will not God *condescend* to do much for them?

2. They are the *Requests of the Spirit*, *ibid.* and shall not the Spirit's requests *be heard*? will not God *condescend* far to these?

3. They are the *groanings of the Spirit*, *ibid.* when they *cannot speak*, he helps them *to groan*, and he hears *groans* as well as *words*, Psal. 102.

4. They are as *Incense*, Psal. 141.2. and the *smoke* of that went upward.

5. They are *Odours*, sweet in the nostrils of God, Rev. 5.8.

6. They are *perfumed with Christs Intercession*,

*sion*, Rev. 8. 3. and will not God condescend far, and do much for these Prayers?

*Use 1. for Information.* 1. We see what *condescendency* we should use to those that are *suiters* and *petitioners* to us; we should be *followers* of God herein; and come off to them in their desires, and condescend all that ever we can to them: we cannot have a better pattern to follow, *Ephes. 5. 1.*

2. We see what a *gracious* God the Lord our God is, that does so farre condescend to his believing Suppliants when they sue to him in behalf of others: No gracious Prince like him, that stoops so low, and comes off so largely to them that sue to him.

3. We see what encouragement we have to *improve Gods mercy* in suing to him in behalf of others, for he *condescends* very farre to us when we speak in their behalf: he *smiles* upon our desires, and gives the thing we sue for; we cannot ask any thing, but we have it.

4. We see who must have the *glory* of what he grants, in so farre *condescending* to us in behalf of others, it is not from any *worthiness* of us that sue, or of those that are sued for, but of his *grace* and *mercy*, and he must have the glory.

5. We see the great *humility* of the Lord, that stoops so low to poor vile dust and ashes; it should make us wonder at it, *Psal. 113. 5, 6.* no

humility like this of the great God towards such earth and clay as we are.

6. We see how precious Believers are in his eyes, that thus condescends to them in granting what they ask of him in behalf of others, and in coming down so low to their desires for them. Surely they are his *Jewels*, as he styles them *Mal. 3. 17.* and very precious to him.

7. We see that Believers Prayers are like *Sweet Odours*, for else God would never condescend so low as he does to them, in hearing them for others as well as for themselves.

8. We see how low we should come down to him in every thing that he calls us & commands us to perform: The very least of his Commandments we should stoop unto, and be willing to say, *Here I am, Lord, Command what thou wilt, and through thy grace and help I will do it.*

9. We see that we may well stoop to him in a way of suffering what he calls us to, if it were to lay our neck to the Block for him, if it were to be whipt and Rack'd for him, if it were to be spitefully used, and scorned, and spat upon, and scoffed, &c. we may well bear it for him, that condescends so farre to us.

Use 2. for Terror to Unbelievers, he will do nothing in such a way for them.

Use 3. for Humiliation, That we too much forget *athens* in our Prayers, that we might prevail for.

Use



Use 4. for Exhortation: 1. To love the Lord that thus condescends to us. 2. To praise him, Psal. 66. 20. 3. To long to be with him. 4. To do and suffer any thing for him. 5. To be humble when we come before him.

Verse 32. And he said, *Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there.* And he said, *I will not destroy it for tens sake.*

**W**E are now come to speak of *Abrahams last Address* that he makes to the Lord, and of the *gracious Answer* that he receives from him.

In the former we have 1. His renewed desire that God would not be angry. 2. His modest insinuation, that he will speak but once more.

In the latter we have the Lords acceptance of what he desires of him, even when he came down so low as to desire mercy for them if there were but ten Righteous found amongst them: *I will not destroy it for tens sake.*

Doct. XXVI. **T**hat believing Suppliants will speak as far as ever they can or dare to the Lord, in behalf of those that they make supplication for.

So does Abraham here, he goes as far as ever

he *could* or *durst*, even to sue for mercy for them if there were but *ten righteous* found amongst them

*Reasons.* 1. From the Lord. 2. From the Believers. 3. From their Prayers.

First, *From the Lord.* 1. He gives them leave to be *very bold* with him, *Heb. 4. 16.* and therefore they go as far as ever they *can* or *dare* with him. If a man give another leave to be *bold* with him, he will try him so far as may be: So God giving us leave to be bold with him, hence it is that we may go as far as we *dare* with him.

2. He *delights* to see his children asking *largely* of him. Fathers love to have their children asking of them as far as they *dare*; and so does the Lord our Father: and that makes us so willing to ask so far of him.

3. He hath the *bowels* of all the *dearest Relations* in him; and what is to be found in *all* of *them*, is infinitely more to be found in him, and therefore we may be willing to speak as far as we can to him.

4. He puts us on to ask *great things* of him, and would not have us *confined* to our own narrow desires, *Jer. 33. 3.* and Believers are willing to put him to it, and try him to the utmost.

5. He *exceeds* our desires, gives us *more* than we ask, as he did to *Solomon*, *1 Kings 3. 13.* and therefore we may speak as far as we can or *dare* to him.

6. He

6. He is displeased when we scant our desires to him. Look as the Prophet was angry with the King of *Israel* in sparing to smite on the ground, 2 Kings 13. 18, 19. so the Lord will be angry when we spare to speak: we might have more, if we would speak more.

Secondly, From the believing Suppliants:

1. They finde grace in his sight, as it is said of *Moses*, *Exod.* 33. 12. and who may speak freely and largely, if not they?

2. They have found by experience that God bath come off largely to them, and therefore cannot scant their desires to him.

3. They have encouragement to enlarge their desires, both by his Commandment and Promise, *Psal.* 81. 10. and what should then hinder?

4. They are *Princes with God*, *Gen.* 32. 28. and being such, they may well speak largely, and ask all they can of him.

5. They go to one that is both full and free, *Gen.* 17. 1. *Jam.* 1. 5. and therefore they may well enlarge their desires all that may be.

6. They are his choice portion, *Deut.* 32. 9. his garden enclosed, *Cant.* 4. 12. that he drops abundantly his blessings upon: The rest of the world may be parched, and dry as a wilderness, but they drink of the dew of heaven, and therefore may gape wide, and enlarge their desires for those they make their supplication for.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, *From their Prayers.* 1. They are heard for much, as well as for little, 1 Jo. 5. 14, 15.

2. They are most accepted, when the suiters ask most, and when they speak as far as they can, as *Abraham* here.

3. They have prevailed with men, and God is infinitely above men in giving liberally. We read of half a Kingdome that they have come off with, *Esth. 5. 3. Mark 6. 23.* but what's that to what God gives? *Himself, his Christ, his Spirit, his Heavenly Kingdome.*

4. They are none of them lost, such Prayers are not turned away, *Psal. 66. 20.*

5. They are the Souls Ambassadors, and they effect what they are sent about, and negotiate great things for us.

6. They sometimes prevail before they are put up, and while we are speaking, *Isa. 65. 24. Dan. 9. 20—23.* All which considered, what wonder is it that they speak as far as ever they can in behalf of those that they make supplication for.

*Use 1. for Information.* 1. We see the tender affection that is in believing suppliants to those they sue for, they will go as far as ever they can in their desires for them.

2. We see that Believers are only they that can be bold with God.

3. We see that faith and love are sweet concomitants, and ever go together, *Gal. 5. 6.*

4. We

4. We see what we are to do, if we would make it out that we are true *Believers*, we must do as *Abraham* here did.

5. We see what *longings* we should have for Heaven, where *Love* will be in its *axum* and perfection.

6. We see how far our desires should be enlarged for the distresses of our dear Countrymen abroad.

7. We see that in all our Prayers we are to go as far as we can with the Lord, and put him to it, in improving his mercy to the utmost. We sue to a gracious God.

8. We see what boldness we ought to use in suing to men in behalf of those that we petition for: we may put them to it, and ask freely of them, for they are to be followers of God as dear children.

9. We see what a precious grace *Faith* is, that makes us so humbly bold with the Lord, 2 Pet. 1. 1.

10. We see that surely Christ speaks much more for us; the Merit of his blood, Heb. 12. 24. and his Intercession, speak aloud for us.

Use 2. for Terrorour to Unbelievers; they can speak nothing for themselves, nor for others.

Use 3. for Humiliation, that we are so scant in our desires for others.

Use 4. for Exhortation: 1. To honour God, with whom Believers may be so bold. 2. To ho-



*nour Believers.* 3. To imitate their faith and love. 4. To love the Lord Jesus, that speaks good for us.

Verse 32. *And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once, &c.*

Doct.XXVII. **T**HAT the Lord is ready to hearken to the utmost of the desires of his believing Suppliants.

*Abraham* besought the Lord, that if there were but ten Righteous in Sodom, that he would not destroy it; and the Lord heard his desire to the utmost, and gave it in to him, and sayes, *I will not destroy it for tens sake.*

*Reasons.* 1. From the Lord. 2. From the Believers. 3. From their Prayers.

First, *From the Lord.* 1. He is never weary of doing his people good; though they follow him therefore with suit upon suit, and go as far as they can in their desires, yet they cannot weary him, and therefore have the utmost of their desires given in to them. We may weary men, Prov.25. 17. but not him, Isa.40.28. We sometimes are weary of him, Isa.43.22. but he is not weary of hearkning to us.

2. He can come up to the utmost of our desires: He is an Almighty One, Job 42.2. and therefore can give all that we desire of him.

3. He

3. He hath put it into the hearts of some men to give to the utmost of what their Petitioners sue for, as Solomon did to the Queen of Sheba, 1 Kin. 10. 13. and will not he then grant the requests of his Suiters to the utmost of what they desire of him? He is more Royal in giving than all the Royal Kings in the world put all together.

4. He hath commanded us to be liberal to our servants, Deut. 15. 13, 14. and will not he then come off liberally to them that serve him, and pray unto him? surely he will come off to them to the utmost of their desires that they put up to him.

5. He fills every living thing, and satisfies their desires, Psal. 145. 16. and will he not then give in to Believers the utmost of their desires, and satisfy them? He will surely do it.

6. He saves to the utmost, Hebr. 7. 25. and therefore grants to the utmost what his believing Suppliants sue unto him for.

Secondly, *From the Believers themselves:*

1. According to their faith they do receive mercy at the Lords hand, Mat. 8. 13. & 9. 29. Now their utmost desires being put up in faith, according to that faith those desires are given into them to the utmost.

2. They please him by their faith, Heb. 11. 5. and if so, then surely he cannot but give them in their desires to the utmost that they bring before

fore him. What may not such have as please a Prince? much more they that please God.

3. They are *they* that are highly commended even by God himself: How famously is *Abraham* spoken of, and renowned for his faith, *Rom. 4. Gal. 3. and Heb. 11.* and the *Centurion*, *Luke 7.9.* and how should it be otherwise then, but that the Lord should give them in their desires to the utmost? *Jon. 1.10. and 2.1. 2.10. 2.21.*

4. They are men *after his own heart*, as is said of *David*, that prime Believer, *Acts 13.22.* and what may not such have?

5. They are *they* that are familiar with him, and keep up acquaintance with him, *Gen. 5.22.* and he will give them the utmost of their desires.

6. They are *they* that have power with God, *Hos. 12.3,4.* and therefore shall have to the utmost of their desires granted to them.

Thirdly, *From their Prayers*, 1. They are argumentative prayers, and they prevail to the utmost: so were *Abraham* here.

2. They are holy prayers, lift up with holy hands and an holy heart, *1 Tim. 2.8. Psal. 86.2.* so were *Abraham* here.

3. They are prayers from a broken heart, *Hos. 12.4.* and *Psal. 51.17.* they prevail.

4. They are importunate prayers: so were *Abraham* here; and they are granted to the utmost, *Luke 11.8.*

5. They

5. They are *modest* prayers: *I will yet speak but this once*, sayes *Abraham*.

6. They are *awfull* prayers: *Oh let not the Lord be angry*, sayes *Abraham*. And such prayers shall be heard to the utmost of our desires.

*Use 1. for Information.* 1. We see what great *encouragement* we have to pray, and not to faint, *Luke 18. 1.* for God grants their desires to the utmost that are *believing Suppliants*. *Abraham* had to the utmost of his desires granted to him.

2. We see that the Lord is a *full Treasury* and *rich Store-house* of all we need, and will give us in all our desires that we ask of him.

3. We see how *dear* Believers are to the Lord, that have *all granted* that they ask, even in the full latitude of their desires.

4. We see how *unwearied* we should be in granting the desires of those that sue to us: God is not *weary* of our desires, and he is our Pattern to follow.

5. We see what cause we have to think that we can never be *obedient enough* to him, that comes up to us in the utmost of our desires that we put up to him.

6. We see what cause we have to *trust him* to the utmost in all *stresses* and *straits*, in all *troubles*, and in *sixes* and *sevens* of them, when they come *thick* upon us, when they come *rolling* one in the neck of another, like the waves of the Sea; now  
it's

it's good trusting him to the *utmost*, that grants our desires to the *utmost*, *Lam. 3. 54—57.*

7. We see what cause we have to love him to the *utmost*, that *fulfils our desires* to the *utmost*: no love is sufficient for him, *Psal. 116. 1.*

8. We see what reason we have to stick to him, to his *Truth* and *Testimonies*, *Josh. 28. 8.* *Psal. 119. 31.* to his *Christ* and *Cause* to the *utmost*, for he grants our desires to the *utmost*.

9. We see that we may well suffer to the *utmost* for him, the *utmost scorns, wrath, fury, flames, rage of enemies, persecutors, devils* against us, for he grants the *utmost* of our desires to us.

10. We see that we may well praise him to the *utmost*, we can never do it enough, *Neh. 9. 5.* Hence *David* calls up *Angels* to this, when his *Soul*, and *all within him* could not reach it, *Psal. 103. 20, 21.*

Use 2. for *Terrour* to Unbelievers, they get nothing.

Use 3. for *Humiliation*, that we pray not as *Abraham* did.

Use 4. for *Exhortation*: 1. To joy in him. 2. To delight in him. 3. To long to with him. 4. To do all we can for him. 5. To prize him, *Psal. 7. 10.*



Verse 32. *And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once, &c.*

Doct. XXVIII. **T**hat even the best of Believers leave Petitioning, before the Lord leave granting.

So did *Abraham* here, when he came so low as to desire that if there were but *ten Righteous* in *Sodom*, the place might not be destroyed, and had a *gracious answer* given in to him; he then ceased to ask any further, and *left off suing* before God *left off giving*. Had he gone yet lower, and desired for *five*, whatever the *Jewish Rabbins* say, for ought either they or I know, God might have granted his desire in that also.

*Reasons.* 1. From the Lord. 2. From the Believers.

First, *From the Lord.* 1. He hath not *limited us*, nor set any bounds to our Prayers, that *hitherto we shall go and no further*, and *here our desires shall stay*; though he hath so bounded the Sea, *Job 38.11.* yet he hath not so limited and bounded our Prayers: but if we ask in faith, and desire any thing according to his will, he *heareth us*, *Matth. 21.22.* *1 Joh. 5.14,15.* and therefore we must needs leave off *suing*, before he leave off *granting*.

2. As he hath set *no bounds* to our Prayers, so he hath not turned away our prayer, nor his mer-

*cy from us*, Psal. 66. 20. Men sometimes do so to those that ask of them, but God never does; we may go as often as we will, and for what we will, if it be lawful that we ask, and may receive it: and therefore we *leave off asking*, before he *leaves off to give*.

3. He could not else take this noble Title to himself, to be *A God hearing Prayer*, Psal. 65. 2. if he should not be as ready to grant as we are to ask: if he should cease to grant before we cease to ask, that Title would be blotted out; but he will be ever known by that Title, it is his *Name*, and though some men have forgotten their own names, yet he will never forget his, but will have it known all the world over that he is *A God hearing Prayer*.

4. He findes fault with us that we ask no more: *Isa. 43. 22. Thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob, but hast been weary of me, O Israel*: and 64. 7. the Prophet complains, *There is none that calleth upon thy Name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee*: and if this displease him so, then sure we leave off to sue, before he to grant.

5. He encourageth us to ask by his *Promises* that he makes to us, *Mat. 7. 7, 8. Joh. 16. 23. As Solomon said to Bathsheba, Ask on, my Mosher, for I will not say thee nay, 1 Kin. 2. 20. So the Lord does encourage us to ask on*; and if so, then it is not *he*, but *we* that fail if we ask not:  
we

we leave off *petitioning* before he leave *granting*.

6. He hath his doors ever open, his *Mercy-seat* and *Throne of Grace* ever set up, that we may repair to; *Heb. 4. 16.* and therefore our *desires* fail, sooner then his *will to grant*, because his doors are never shut, nor his *Mercy-seat* never barred up, but we may go to it when we will.

Secondly, *From the Believers themselves:*  
1. We have *narrow hearts*, and our desires are frant, and are not so full as his hand is in giving: He opens his hand wide, but we shut our hearts. Narrow mouth'd vessels receive in little, though it rain abundantly: such vessels are our hearts, were they more open, and more capable to receive, we might have more; but the narrowness of our desires and hearts makes us leave off *petitioning*, before he leave *giving*: even *Abraham* himself, though he had a larger heart then other men, yet had it more *straitned* then Gods hand was to give.

2. We are apt to *stint our selves*, and to set bounds to our desires: *I will speak yet but this once*, sayes *Abraham* here. And we *stinting our selves*, hence it comes to pass that we sooner cease to make our requests, then the Lord to give out his grants.

3. We are afraid that he may be angry with us for asking him so much, as *Abraham* here was, and that *shortens our desires*, and bars up our requests,

quests, so that we have sooner done petitioning, then the Lord hath in granting. The fear of a Princes *anger* stops his mouth that is to sue to him, and makes him lay by his Petition : so here.

4. We are apt to make an insinuation of our *modesty*, that we would not go beyond *due bounds* in asking, and this makes us cease petitioning, before the Lord leaves off to grant : So did *Abraham* here, he was a modest suiter, *I will speak* (sayes he) *yet but this once*. So do modest suiters to men, that would give more if *asked*; and so do we to the Lord.

5. We are apt to think that we may be *too bold in asking*, and that will cause us to cease our suits. They that make *over-bold* with Princes are not wise, and sometimes get a frown for it: Thus *Abraham*, though he was bold with the Lord, yet he was afraid he might be *too bold*, and therefore gave over *suing*, before the Lord gave over *granting*.

6. We are far short (even the best of us) of *those bowels of mercy and compassion that are in God*. We are made partakers of the divine Nature according to our *measure*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. but fall short, and as far short as *finite creatures* do of the *Infinite One*, in those Perfections that are in him, and in particular this of *Mercy*: and therefore though our bowels may work us up to *desire much*, yet it is nothing to what is in the Lord

Lord himself: ours are *mites*, but his *Talents*; ours are *atomes* and *motes*, but his like *Mountains*; ours like a *candle*, but his like the *Sun*; ours *little rivulets*, his like the *great Sea*. Now then his bowels being so *full and large*, and ours so *scant*, it is not to be marvelled at if we *leave off petitioning*, before he *leave off granting*.

*Use 1. for Information.* 1. We see how exceedingly we are engaged to the Lord for his mercy, in that he stops not our monthes in praying to him, but lets it appear that we *leave off petitioning* before he *leaves off granting*; he might justly turn away our prayer, and his mercy from us, but his Name is for ever to be praised for it, that he does it not: so David sayes, *Psal. 66. 20.* and so are we to say, and count our selves indebted to him; that will not deny us in *any thing* that we *sue for*, but so long as we pray, gives us in our desires; and lets us *leave suing*, before he *leave granting*. We are never able enough to *exalt his Name* for it.

2. We see what an *amiable*, and *bountifull*, and *royall One* we have to do with, that ceaseth not to grant our desires that we put up to him, but we *leave off suing*, before he *ceaseth giving*. It is not thus with men, it is not thus with Princes, for though they come off royally to those that are in favour with them, and sue to them, yet they put a *period* to their grants: but our God



is more royal then they, for he does never cease giving, before we cease asking.

3. We see what *narrow hearts* we have, and how contracted our desires are, that we have sooner done asking then he hath in giving, that we leave off petitioning before he leave off granting. We are not straitned in him, but we are straitned in our own bowels; our hearts are not enlarged as God would have them, but we give over first, we are weary first: God would be willing to hear more of us, but we are willing to leave off, and to speak no more, or else God would not be tired out with our requests, how many soever they be that we put up to him.

4. We see how abundantly he will satisfie us in a state of glory, that is so willing to fulfill our desires here, that we leave off suing before he leave off granting. There will be all satisfaction there: if he have more to give here then we ask, then surely when he gets us there, we shall have our fill of him, the desires of our hearts shall be abundantly satisfied; if he stream out here beyond our desires, what Rivers will flow in upon us there? if here he be above our desires, and hath more to give then we to ask; Oh how will the Sea break in upon us, to overflow all the banks and bounds of our desires? there will be a spring-tide coming in amain upon us; there's that there that will be good measure, pressed down,  
shaken

*shaken together, and running over.* If God hath more to give then we ask here; Oh what *Eternal springs* and *full Seas* of satisfaction shall we there swim in, and like the *Leviathan*, play and sport in it to all eternity! Our desires are *strait* and *narrow* here, but there as they are *enlarged* more abundantly, so they shall be abundantly filled, and every corner of them brim-full, *Psal.* 16. 11. & 17. 15. and therefore what *longings* and *breathings* should we have after Heaven? Our hearts are *strait* and *narrow* here, but there they shall be *large*, and be in a capacity to take in more then ever we could here. We ask a little here, and cease; but there we shall receive in more then ever we *asked* or *thought*, *Eph.* 3. 20. We petition for a few things, and then give over; but then when we are in a state of glory, our Souls will be capable of taking in more abundantly then ever they could let out in their desires here.

5. We see that if we have no more then we have, we cannot fasten any blame upon God, he is clear, *The King and his Throne* are *guiltless*; the fault is *ours*, that we leave off asking, before he leave off granting. We might have more, if we asked more; our desires are *short*, when the Lords hand is *long*; our Petitions are at an end, when his grants end not; we give over speaking in prayer, before he hath done answering: even

the best of men have sooner done in their suits, then the Lord hath in his royal gratuities; did we stretch out our desires more, we should finde his loving kindness more stretched out to us, and further put forth in the extent and latitude of it.

*Use 2. for Terror* to those that ask not at all, what can they look for from the Lord? If Believers leave off petitioning before he leave off granting, and end their suits before he make an end of giving, what will become of those that never beg in their suits to him? There are multitudes in the world that never put up a serious request to him; and if they never get any thing of him, what cause have they to complain? *Jam. 4. 2.*

*Use 3. for Humiliation*, that we are so short in our desires, and so straitned in our asking: we strip our selves of many a fair blessing that we might win and wear; we deprive our selves of many a royal grant that we might have sealed and confirmed: God would do more for us, if we asked more of him; he hath a full hand, and a large heart, but we have narrow hearts, and straitned desires in suing to him.

*Use 4. for Exhortation*: 1. To pray for enlarged hearts in prayer, it must come from Heaven, as every other good and perfect gift must, *Jam. 1. 17. Joh. 3. 27.* He can open these narrow bottles, and enlarge these straitned hearts; we cannot

cannot do it, but he can, *Psal. 119. 32.*

2. To love the Lord when he gives us to enlarge our desires in prayer to him: when these wheels are going, then we shall strike right as a Clock does; when we slack not in our way, we shall come to our happy journeys end.

3. To obey him, *Psal. 119. 32. cheerfully, speedily, strongly, constantly, as is in running a race.*

4. To praise him for an enlarged heart in prayer for our selves or others, for that best hearts are apt to be too strait, *1 Sam. 2. 1.*

5. To pray without ceasing upon all occasions, *1 Thess. 5. 17.* for when we have done all we can, we shall sooner cease suing, then he granting.

6. To admire and adore the Royalty of God, that would do more, if we could ask more. A Kings Royalty is admired.

7. To long for Heaven, where we shall praise him with enlarged hearts for his large grants, *2 Cor. 5. 6, 7.*

8. To do more for others then they desire of us.

Verse 32. *And he said, Ob let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once, &c.*

Doct. XXIX. **T**hat Believers, when they pray to the Lord, dare not be overbold with him, but modestly sue to him to grant what they desire of him.

*I will speak yet but this once, sayes Abraham.* He had made very bold with him in going from step to step, till he came to the lowest step that he durst go, and now in modesty he will go no further, but leaves off suing any more; he will ask for Ten, but there he will make a stop.

*Reasons.* 1. From the Believers. 2. From their Desires. 3. From the Lord that they have to do with.

First, *From the Believers.* 1. They know who God is, and who themselves are; and therefore dare not be overbold with him. He is a great God, and they vile dust and ashes, and how should they dare to press too much upon him? Mean men dare not be too bold with their Superiours; how then can we that are Believers that are infinitely below the Lord, make too bold with him? *Mephibosheth* was lowly before *David*, when he looked at himself, and all his fathers house, to be but dead men, and therefore thought he had no right to cry unto the King, 2 Sam. 19. 28. So Believers judge themselves, and



and therefore cannot tell how to be too bold with him.

2. They are men of *ingenuity* and *modesty*, for faith ever keeps down the heart, and makes it low, and is opposed to *pride*, Hab. 2. 4. We see it in the *Centurion*, how humble and modest he was, and it was his *faith* that made him so, Luke 7. 7, 8, 9. and therefore dare not be *over-bold* with him. Humble ingenuity dare not ask too much of men, much less be too bold with the Lord.

3. Believers are *wise* and *prudent* men, and therefore *faith* is called *wisdom*, Luke 1. 17. and they would not shew themselves *wise*, if they should be *over-bold* with the Lord. Wise men will not be too bold with Princes, much less they that are *truly wise* make too bold with the Lord.

4. They are such as *think* themselves *unworthy* of the least of his mercies, Gen. 32. 10. and therefore cannot tell how to be too bold with him.

5. They are afraid that the Lord may be *angry* with them. So the Text. And that makes them to be so humbly modest with him. [But of that more in the next Note.]

6. They are friends of God, Jam. 2. 23. and *why* though they may be bold with their friends, yet will not be *over-bold* with them: So here.

Secondly,

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5. They are afraid that the Lord may be *angry* with them: So the Text. And that makes them to be so humbly modest with him. [But of that more in the next Note.]

6. They are friends of God, Jam. 2. 23. and they though they may be bold with their friends, yet will not be *over-bold* with them: So here.

Secondly,

Secondly, *From their Desires and Prayers:*

1. They must be *bounded* within the compass of *Gods will*, 1 Joh. 5. 14. and if we should be *over-bold* with him, we should go *beyond those bounds*, and that Believers will not do.

2. They must be *humble desires*, Psal. 10. 17. and they would not be such, if we should be *over-bold* with him.

3. They must be *serious* and *sincere desires*, not slight and formall; and if so, then we must not be *too bold* with him. A serious Petitioner will ask modestly of men; so they that are serious will be modest in their suits to the Lord, Psal. 17. 1.

4. They must be *holy desires*; and *holiness* and *over-much boldness* will not stand together, Jam. 4. 8. the *more holy* any man is, the *more modest* and *humble* he is.

5. They must be *earnest* and  *fervent desires*, Jam. 5. 16. and no man that is *over-bold* with man can be *earnest* in his suit, much less he that is *too bold* with the Lord.

6. They must be *inwrought desires*, Jam. 5. 16. the heart must be in them, *lip-labour* will not be accepted, Jer. 12. 2. Now they that are *over-bold* with the Lord, cannot speak in their desires from the heart, nor have any hope that such desires shall be accepted.

Thirdly, *From the Lord that we have to do with.*

1. He

1. He is a great God, and a great King above all gods, Psal. 95. 3. and it no way becomes the best of men to be *over-bold* with such a great One as he is, but to be modest in our addresses to him.

2. He is a good God, Psal. 136. 1. and willing to give us that which is good for us, Psa. 84. 11. and therefore it's no way fit for us to take *too much boldness* upon us, there's no need of it.

3. He is such a God as can be *angry* at our Prayers, when we keep not within his bounds, but make *too bold* with him, Psal. 80. 4.

4. He is very *merciful* in granting to the utmost our *lawful requests* that we put up to him; and why should we strain him and screw him up higher? we would not do so with men, how much less should we with the Lord? Exod. 34. 6.

5. He is a God that *respects the lowly*, Psal. 138. 6. and such modest suiters are *lowly ones*.

6. He wants neither *will nor power* to give what is meet, and therefore though we may be *humbly bold* with him, yet it's no way fit for us to press upon him, or to be *over-bold* with him; we would not do so to the best friend we have in the world.

*Use 1. for Information.* 1. We see the sweet *ingenuity* that is in true Believers, who though they can be bold with the Lord in their Prayers that they put up to him, yet they dare not press



*too far*; nor make *too bold* with him: So it is with an ingenious man to his friend that he hath many kindnessees from, he will not press him over much, nor make *too bold* with him in his requests, but knows how to give his desires a stop, and to speak no more:; and so it is with Believers, when they have asked and gotten much; they dare not press upon such a friends kindness, but will stop, as *Abraham* here does, and say, *I will speak yet but this once.*

2. We see that Believers are *modest* and *humble* ones, they can be *bold* in their suits to the Lord, but dare not be *over-bold*. Faith in Christs Name makes us *bold with God*, Eph. 3. 12. but it likewise keeps us *within bounds*, that our prayers may not become sin to us, by being *over-bold* with him.

3. We see that they that *want faith*, as they sin on one hand in being *too short* in their desires; so on the other side it is possible that they may make *too bold* with the Lord, as other-ways, so in stretching out our desires in an *unlawful way*: for it is *faith* that gives a stop to such desires as are not according unto God.

4. We see that though there be a kinde of *sinful modesty* in refusing to ask when God would have us ask, as was in *Ahaz*, Isa. 7. 11, 12, 13. so there is a *modesty* that springs from *faith*, in putting a *barre* and *stop* to our desires when we may

may exceed our bounds, as we see here in *Abraham*, who said to the Lord that *he would speak yet but this once.*

5. We see what *longings* we should have for Heaven, where (as we shall have the accomplishment of all our desires that we have put up here, so) we shall be out of all danger of *sinning* in any of our desires: for our *prayers* here shall be turned into *praises* there, which shall never cease to all eternity. Here even believers make a *stop* and *stay* in their *Petitions*; but *there*, there will be no *stop* or *barre* put to our *Praises*, but they shall continue without intermission, without interruption, without cessation.

6. We see how *hulily modest* we should be in our requests that we put up to the Lord, if we would shew our selves Believers: we may be *bold*, and *take upon us to speak to the Lord*, but so as not to be *over-bold* with him. They that are in favour with men may *ask much*, and *speak boldly*, but if they be *too bold* they are sure to get a severe check: So here:

7. We see how *truly wise* Believers are in the *Petitions* they put up to the Lord, they know *who God is with whom they have to do*, and *who themselves are*, and therefore though they *speak boldly*, yet they *speak safely*; they *speak freely*, but do not *over-speak*; they know how in *modesty* to make a *stop*, and to set *bounds* to their desires,  
and

and to speak no further. Wise men will do so in framing their requests to men, and Believers are so wise in praying to the Lord, as *Abraham* here.

8. We see what difference there is between our Prayers *here*, and the Praises we shall give to the Lord in a *state of glory*. Here Believers in their Prayers make a *stop* and go no further, and set *bounds* to their desires; but in a state of glory our Praises will *never cease*, we shall give *Thanks* to all eternity, and sing everlasting *Hallelujahs* to him that *sitteth upon the Throne*; and to the *Lamb* for ever and ever. Here we have our *pauses* and *cessations*, and will proceed no further in our suits; but there will be *no end* of our Praises *there*, as the life will be *endless* that we shall live there, *Heb. 7. 16*. so there shall be *no period* put to our Praises, we shall make *no stops* there in sounding out our Thanksgivings to him; but as the *Angels* rest not day and night, saying, *Holy; holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come*, *Rev. 4. 8*. so it shall be with us, we shall never rest praising of our God, no *pauses* shall be put to our Thanks, but as the Sun never stands still, but is upon his *race* that he is running, *Psal. 19. 5*. so it will be with us, we shall never stand still, but *run our race* in praising and blessing God to all eternity.

*Use 2. for Terror* to those that call not upon God at all, but are meer *Atheists*, and say in their hearts, *There is no God*. Believers know when to end, but these know not where to begin; and see their sad doom, *Jer. 10. 25*. To deny a Deity in not praying to God, is to be worse then the brute Creatures, and the Ravens, that after their manner cry to God.

*Use 3. for Humiliation*, to those that ask further then God would have them: as *Moses* did, *Deut. 3. 24—27*. he got a deniall and a check, and so shall we, if we go beyond our bounds this way.

*Use 4. for Exhortation*: 1. To be wise, to know how far we are to go in our desires, and when to make a stop and stay. So *Abraham*: *I will speak yet but this once*.

2. To long for Heaven, where there will be no end of our Praises, though we make a stop in our Prayers here. We may sin here in our desires, but there we cannot in our heavenly Thanksgivings: we may tread awry here when we pray, but never there when we sing his praise.

3. To be modest in our addresses to the Lord, and therein declare our faith.

4. To take heed of that sin, *Mat. 6. 7*.

5. To bewail our inordinate desire after that that's sin.

6. To beware of ambitious desires, *Mat. 20. 20, 21, 22.* U Verse

Verse 32. *And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, &c.*

Doct. XXX. **T**Hat Believers when they pray, and make their last Request to the Lord, are very tender of displeasing him.

Thus *Abraham*, when he made his last Request in behalf of the *Righteous* that he hoped might be in *Sodom*, is very tender of displeasing him: *Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but this once.*

*Reasons.* 1. From the Lord. 2. From Believers. 3. From the Requests themselves.

First, *From the Lord.* 1. Though he be not soon displeased, but slow to anger, especially with his own dear ones, yet he knows how to be displeased with them, and with their prayers, as he was with *Moses* and the Prayer that he made, *Deut. 3. 24, 25, 26.* and therefore we had need be tender of displeasing him, when we make our last Petitions to him.

2. He wills that we should be bold with him in our Requests to him, *Heb. 4. 16.* but he would not have us put him beyond what he intends to do for us. *Moses* would have had him go beyond his intentions, in the Prayer he put up, and God could not bear that. *Abraham* was afraid of this, and therefore is very tender of displeasing him in this last Request to him.

3. He



3. He is very free in granting what we desire according to his will, 1 Joh. 5. 14, 15. but if we should go contrary to his will in what we desire, then he knows how to deny us, and will be displeased at it; and we should be tender of that, as Abraham here was.

4. He is very tender of us, of our Names, of our Estates, of our Bodies, of our Lives, of our Souls, of our Comforts for outward and inward man, every way tender of our good; and therefore we should be tender of displeasing him, especially when we pray to him, and when we bring our last Requests to him.

5. He is tender of his own glory, Isa. 42. 8. and therefore we should be tender of it too, and tender of putting any dishonour upon him by displeasing him. We would be tender of displeasing a Prince. So here.

6. He is tender of displeasing us, of sending us far away from his Presence when we pray to him; and therefore when we pray to him, we should be very tender of displeasing him. We would be tender of displeasing any that were dear to us: So here.

Secondly, From the Believers. 1. They are his Children, and Children are tender of displeasing their father; so are they, and so should they be, especially when they pray to him, and come with their last request in that duty before him;

2. They are *his friends*, Jam. 2. 23. and friends are tender of displeasing one another : so here.

3. They are *his Spouse*, Cant. 5. 1. and a Spouse is tender of displeasing her Husband, especially when she is to ask any thing of him, and any great thing : So should we.

4. They are very familiar with him, and he with them : [*As I shall (God willing) shew when I come to the last Verse of this Chapter.*] and they that are intimately familiar, they are tender of displeasing one another : So here.

5. They are the *Apple of his Eye* that he cannot endure a touch of, Zech. 2. 8. and if so, how should they endure to touch him by displeasing him, especially when they pray and desire some great thing of him ?

6. They are such as he hath rebuked Kings for, so tender they have been to him, Psal. 105. 14, 15. and may they not then be very tender of displeasing him, especially when they pray to him, and ask high of him ?

Thirdly, *From the Requests themselves.* 1. They are such as we hope to gain most by, as Abraham here did, that came up so high, as to desire to prevail in his suit if there had been but ten found in that great place : and this made him to be so tender of displeasing the Lord that he prayed unto.

2. They are such Requests as make trial of his

his Bounty and Mercy most, and whereby we put him to it to condescend very far to us in granting our requests; and therefore we ought to be tender of displeasing him.

3. They are such Requests as whereby we are most bold with him, and therefore may well suspect our selves that we may over-speak, and so displease him.

4. They are such requests as are for great matters, and are great requests, and we are poor worms, vile dust and ashes, and therefore may and ought to be tender of displeasing him in so asking.

5. They are such requests as are put up by them that are less then the least of his mercies, Gen. 32. 10. and therefore they may suspect that they may be too bold, and so displease the Lord.

6. They are such requests as are rare, and seldom put up; we reade but of this onely man that went thus step by step in his requests: Abraham was the onely one, no other before him, nor scarce any since; and therefore he might justly fear that he might displease the Lord in what he did.

Use 1. for Information. 1. We see the sweet disposition that's in believing suppliants when they come to pray before the Lord, they are very tender of displeasing him; they would not willingly do any thing at any time that should move him to displeasure, but especially when they pray

to him, and make their last Request to him, they would not then provoke him; they would then have a smile of his face, they would then have a kiss of his mouth, they would then have an answer of peace, they would then have a sweet shine from heaven, they would then have fair weather over head, they would not have a cloud arise upon them, nor any frown appear in the Lords brow, nor any wrinkle in his face at their Prayers, but are very tender of displeasing him: So was Abraham here, when he said, *Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but this once.*

2. We see that when a Believer is in a praying frame, he is then in an awfull frame, Gods dread Majesty, and his consciousness of his own sins, put an holy awe into his heart, and make him afraid that the Lord may be displeased with him. Prayer is an awfull Ordinance, and they that are most earnest in it (as Abraham here was) they are most awfully afraid, and most tender of doing anything in the duty, especially in the close of it, that might displease him that they pray unto.

3. We see that if we would make it out that we are Believers, we must be tender of displeasing God, (as at all times, so) then more especially when we pray to him, and in the close of our Requests that we present the Lord with. So did Abraham here, and if we would evidence  
that

we are *his children*, so must we. *Faith* and *fear* go hand in hand, lodge in the same breast together, dwell in the same heart together; where the *one is*, there is the *other*; that man in whose heart *faith is*, is ever *afraid*, and *tender of displeasing God*, especially then when he makes his *last and greatest request to him*.

4. We see what a mercy of God it is to any of us, that we have *hearts stricken with fear of displeasing God*, especially when we pray before him, for thereby he evidenceth to us that we are *Believers*: for so *Abraham* did, he was tender of *displeasing him* in praying to him, and especially in his *last words* that he spake in suing to him in their behalf that he prayed for. He would not have the Sun set in a Cloud at Even.

5. We see that the *displeasure of God* is that that is to be *feared* above all other things. Some there are that *fear man*, but there's a *snare* in that, *Prov. 29. 25*. Some there are that are *afraid of Princes*, and what they can do against them, but *they are in Gods hand*, *Prov. 21. 1*. and he knows how to be *terrible to them*, *Psal. 76. 12*. Some are *afraid of Persecutors*, but they *can but kill the body*, *Luke 12. 4*. Some are *afraid of evil spirits*, and the very *supposal* of the sight of them makes even *good men afraid* sometimes, *Mat. 14. 26*. and some are in *great fear* where *no fear is*, *Psal. 53. 5*. But these are all *vain fears*, and like



*Bag-bears* to fright children with; but the displeasure of God is that that is to be feared above all things. So godly men have thought, so Abraham judged, that was so tender of displeasing him; *Oh let not the Lord be angry*, sayes he, and then he cared not who else were angry.

6. We see that to *displease* God then when men pray to him, is that that is and ought to be most loathsome to every gracious heart: Oh! he would not then do any such thing willingly for a world: it's a burthen to displease him at any time; but then to do it, when they pray, is that that is most abhorring to them; *Oh let not the Lord be angry*, sayes Abraham, and I will speak but this once.

7. We see what a sad imprecation that is that we reade of *Psal. 109. 7. Let his prayer become sin.* For Prayer-sins have great guilt in them, and godly men of all other sins, wish that they may not displease the Lord by them.

8. We see what our duty is when we come to pray before the Lord, to look to it that our prayers be pure, and undefiled prayers, that God may not finde any thing in them that may provoke him to be angry with us for them.

9. We see that to *displease* God when we pray to him, argues that we do not pray in faith; for this prime Believer Abraham is very tender of displeasing him: *Oh* (sayes he) *let not the Lord be angry*, and I will speak, yet but this once.

10. We

10. We see that we may not wonder that unbelievers when they pray get nothing of the Lord, *1 am. 1. 6, 7.* for how should they, when they *displease him* when they pray to him?

*Use 2. for Terror* to those that provoke the Lord in praying to him, they are unbelievers, and in a state of damnation, *Mark 16. 16. Joh. 3. 36.* if it be frequent.

*Use 3. for Humiliation* to those of the Saints that are not so tender of displeasing the Lord as they ought to be when they pray to him: these forget *Abraham* their father, and trace not his steps in a way of believing as they ought, or at least come not up to that pitch of it that they should aspire after.

*Use 4. for Exhortation:* 1. To be ashamed of our *Prayer-sins*, that so displease him. Who would displease a Prince that petitions to him, and looks for any great matter from him?

2. To shew our selves *Heirs of Abrahams faith*, by being tender of displeasing the Lord when we pray to him.

3. To exalt *Grace* when the Lord accepts our Prayers, and is not angry with us for them.

4. To love the Lord for his regarding of them, *Psal. 116. 1.* for our Prayers have their spots, and are defiled the best of them.

5. To take heed of these sins that displease God when we pray to him. [They have been formerly mentioned,

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mentioned, and need not be again spoken of.]

6. To long for the time when we shall displease him no more.

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Verse 33. And the Lord went his way, after he had left communing with Abraham. And Abraham returned unto his place.

Doct. XXXI. **T**hat when Believers have been praying to the Lord, and have received gracious answers to the requests that they have put up to him, he then allows them to go about their other lawful occasions and businesses that they have to do.

So we see here, after Abraham had ended his Prayer, then the Lord went his way, and Abraham returned to his place: God allowed him to go about his ordinary occasions. Though Prayer be an acceptable service, and that that we should be frequent and serious in, yet the Lord would have us do something else besides this, and not spend all our time in this duty, but fall to some other work. As we must be fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord; so we must not be slothful in business, Rom. 12. 11. Our particular Callings must be attended, as well as our generall: we must have regard principally to the duties of Gods Worship, but withall must look to our other

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Concernments in the matters of this life; and holy duties (such as Prayer is) must give way to them.

*Reasons.* 1. From the Lord. 2. From our selves. 3. From our other outward occasions and imployments.

First, *From the Lord.* 1. He hath enjoyed and appointed to every one that they should be in *some Calling*, and that they should abide therein, 1 Cor. 7. 20, 24. the greatest on Earth are not exempted: The *Magistrate* is to attend to his great Work, Rom. 13. 6. the *Minister* to his, Acts 20. 28. 2 Tim. 4. 1, 2. 1 Pet. 5. 2. and so of the rest. There's none must think to live an idle life without a Calling; he hath appointed to every man his work, Mark 13. 34. he is the great Lord and Master that hath set every one his task; he will have us all be up and doing: We must not any of us think to live and do nothing, but to be busily imployed in our Callings for him.

2. He hath of old shadowed out this to us under the Law, the clean beasts were not onely to chew the cud, but to divide the hoof, Levit. 11. 3. Now this dividing the hoof, holds out our right dividing between our general and particular Calling, and that one should not cross, or interfere with another, but diligently and carefully to attend the duties of both. Our general Calling, and the duties of it, must not jstle out our particular

particular Calling; nor our particular Calling must not jumble out the duties of our general Calling, but we must divide aright between them.

3. He reproves Idleness in our particular Callings, as in that Parable *Mat. 20. 6.* and therefore would have us diligently employed, and faithfully busie in our Callings that he hath set us in.

4. He abhors Idleness, being one of Sodoms sins, which provoked him to rain fire and brimstone upon them to destroy them, *Ezek. 16. 49. Gen. 19. 24.* and to send them to Hell to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, *Jude ver. 7.*

5. He is ever at work himself, he is alwayes doing, working Creating work, Providential work; he is never idle, but full of activity, pure act, *Joh. 5. 17.* and therefore his will sure is that we should work. The Servants must not be idle when the Master is at work: So here.

6. He hath put activity in the other Creatures: The Angels, how full of activity are they? and therefore are described to have wings to fly with, *Isa. 6. 2.* and they rest not day nor night, but are alwayes busily employed in Heaven and in Earth, and where-ever their Commission is to do any work for the Lord. The Sun never stands still, but is as a Bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race, *Psal. 19. 5.* And the like may be said of the other Celestiall Bodies, they are in continual motion,



tion, and alwayes casting forth their influences. The *Sea* is working constantly, *ebbing and flowing*, and bearing those great burthens of *Ships* and other *Vessels* upon its back, and carrying them hither and thither from one *Country* to another; and is in motion by producing such innumerable *Creatures* as are therein, and by *Leviathan* playing therein, *Psal. 104. 25, 26.* The *Earth*, though it stand still, yet is it not idle, being the *Theatre* of all the *Acts* that are done by the sons of men; and specially because it is the *breeder and feeder* of all the *active Creatures* that are upon it, and because it is *unwearied* in bearing seed, and *fruits*, and *herbs*, and *grass*, and *corn*, &c. The *Springs* and *Fountains* are ever working, and bubbling up their water. The *Bee* is a busie and laborious *Creature*; and so is the *Ant*, that little *Creature*; and therefore *Solomon* adviseth the *sluggard* to go to her, to consider her wayes, and be wise, *Prov. 6. 6, 7, 8.* I might be large in the prosecution of this, but these instances may suffice to be as so many *glasse*s, to shew us how *diligent*, and *active*, and *industrious* we should be in our *particular Callings*, and that God would have us busily working in our several places and stations for him.

Secondly, *From our selves.* 1. We are ever best when we are at work; our hearts are never in better frame to go to God in duties of our  
general

*general Calling*, then when we have been most conscientially careful in being diligent in our *particular Calling*. We can then go with comfort to pray, when we have been at work; and never are we fitter to offer up this *spiritual sacrifice*, then when *sloth* hath not seized upon us in our *particular Callings*. And hence it is that these are coupled together, *Rom. 12. 11. Not slothful in business, fervent in Spirit serving the Lord.*

2. We shall be pronounced *blessed*, if we be found well-doing when our Lord cometh, *Matth. 24. 46.* and it is that that we would all desire after, to be partakers of that *blessedness*, who would not be found so at that day?

3. We are not yet in heaven, but on earth, and therefore must attend on our *outward occasions and businesses* that we are called to. When we come in heaven we shall rest from all our works here, and be wholly imployed in serving God, and praising him, *Rev. 22. 3, 4.* we shall do *Angelical work, Seraphical work*; but while we are here we must be doing in *ordinary work*: and it is a good work, because commanded of God.

4. We need many things for the *outward man*, which by diligence in our *ordinary Callings*, through the blessing of God, are brought in to us, *Prov. 10. 4, 22.* we get our *daily bread* by the labour of our hearts and hands, *food, and rai-*  
ment

ment, and physick, and all necessities by the Lords mercy are given in to us this way : *The King himself is served by the field*, Eccles. 5. 9. Gods crowning the year with his goodness, his steps dropping fatness, make our labours successful, and bring in all outward blessings to us ; and therefore diligence in our *Callings* is that that God approves, and looks for from every one of us.

5. We are commanded to *labour six dayes in the week*, Exod. 20. 9. except upon extraordinary occasion ; as upon a *Fast*, or by sickness we be hindred, or by some other occasion that justly exempts us, and keeps us necessarily from it : we may not look at it as a *permission* onely, but as a *strict command*, and that calls upon us to be about our business, and be doing in our particular *Callings*.

6. We have Gods example in the *first Creation* set before us to follow, he did his work in *six dayes*, and then *rested*, Exod. 20. 9. and so would by his example have us to work, and to trace his steps. So that not onely *Earth*, and *Sea*, and *Stars*, but *Heaven it self* calls upon us to *labour* and work diligently in our *Callings*.

Thirdly, *From our outward occasions and imployments* : 1. They are such as that we cannot serve God comfortably neither in our *Bodies*, nor in our *Spirits*, except we labour and attend our particular *Callings*, and we are bound to  
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serve him and glorifie him in both, 1 Cor. 6. 20. and how shall this be, except we follow our employments? Meat will not fall into our mouthes except we *labour*; Clothing will not be rained down from heaven upon us, except we *work* for it: and without these we cannot *serve God*, neither with *outward* or *inward man*.

2. These employments in our Callings are such as that we cannot *live without them*: Bread is called *The staff of life*, Isa. 3. 1. and Clothing is the *health of life*; and neither of these in an ordinary way can be had without *labour*.

3. These employments in our *particular Callings* are such, as that we cannot expect the  *blessing of the Lord* upon us: *The blessing of the Lord maketh rich*; but it is when *the hand is diligent*, Prov. 10. 4, 22. otherwise there is no  *blessing of wealth*, or *increase* promised.

4. These employments in our *particular Callings* do fit us to come to God in *spiritual duties*, and fit us for his coming to us either by *death* or *judgement*, Luke 12. 42, 43, 44. and this is worth something. It was the speech of a faithful Minister (now with God) to one that he found working hard in his Calling, *Let me be found so doing when my Lord cometh*.

5. These ordinary employments keep us from *many sins*, and from *many temptations to sin*, preserve us from *many assaults of the Enemy* that  
*Idleness*

*Idleness* will expose us to : As we see in *Dauids* example, 2 *Sam.* 11. if he had gone forth to war at that time, or had been doing any thing that was good, he would not have fallen into such snares and sins as he did, which *idleness* exposed him to. *Satan* and his own corruption would not have so prevailed, as they then did when he gave himself to that sloth that we there reade of. A diligent hand prevents the tempters coming, or at least hinders him from overcoming. Working in our Calling will either keep the snare from being laid for us, or keep our feet from being taken by it : And have we not cause then to be diligent, and faithfully busie in our Calling ?

6. These labours and employments preserve us from falling into other dangers and evils ; for God hath promised that his Angels shall have charge over us, to keep us in our wayes, *Psal.* 91. 11. Let a man but keep himself in his Calling, and Gods Angels shall keep him : They are Gods host, and so long as they are about him, a strong host is about him, so that neither plague nor sickness, nor any other evil shall come near him, *v.* 10. he is safely guarded, that hath such a military guard about him, he need not fear any danger, that hath these fiery chariots and horses round about him, 2 *Kin.* 6. These armies will never fly, but will stand by us, and shield off all dangers, and all enemies : and have we not good cause then to be in our Callings ?



*Cautions about our Employments in our particular Callings.*

1. **W**E must take heed that love of the world set us not on work to be busie in our Callings, for that is straitly forbidden, 1 Joh 2. 15. and such are not true to God, but are called *Adulterers*, and *Adulteresses*, and are the enemies of God, Jam. 4. 4. and the greatest enemies that are to themselves; for thereby they plunge themselves into many snares and temptations, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in perdition and destruction, 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10. If the love of the world be the great wheel that sets all a going, and puts our hands to labour in our Callings, we shall never please God, nor benefit our selves or others by what we do this way. The world is both an *Harlot* and a *Witch*; and if we lust after the beauty of this *Harlot*, and suffer our selves to be taken with her eye-lids; if we seek after this *Witch*, as *Saul* did after the *Witch of Endor*, and bribe the *Harlot* and *Witch* with the labour of our hands, we shall never do that that is acceptable to God, nor that that we shall reap any good by, but pierce our selves thorow with many sorrows, and when we come to die, we shall say that we have laboured for the wind, and have miserably deluded our Souls by courting such a *Strumpet*, and enquiring after such an old *Witch*, and taking so much pains to win the world, and lose our own Souls: and what a miserable bargain will that be to us? Mat. 16. 26.

2. We must beware that we do not so labour in our particular Calling, as that we reserve no time for God, and for holy duties. Many there are that are so intent upon their ordinary employment, that God hears not of them neither in their Closets, nor in their Families, and it may be scarce come to Publick Worship; or if to any of these, or all of these, yet they are so indisposed, so drowsie, so careless, and every way so unfit, that they had better do nothing. Some labour in their particular Calling all the week

week so, that on the Lords-day they are fitter to sleep then to pray, to take a Nap of an hour long, then to bear half so long; or if they keep their eyes open, yet their hearts are asleep, or going after their Coverousness, and both eyes and heart are estranged from God, and the Duty, and the Day, and art so common and unsavoury, that God abhors what they offer up to him, being no better then blinde, and lame, and sick sacrifices, which they would be loth to present a Prince with, but they think any thing good enough for God. Let such know, that the Curse is not farre from such men. See Ezek. 33. 31. Malac. 1. 8, 14.

3. We must take heed that in labouring in our particular Calling, we do not spend our labour for that which satisfieth not, Isa. 55. 2. The truth is, these outward things that men labour for, will not satisfie, they are not Bread that is of a filling nature. Hence Eccles. 5. 10. Ezek. 7. 19. and therefore such labour turns to no profit: To eat, and not have enough by our labour; to earn wages, and put all in a bag with holes, is a judgement, Hagai 1. 6.

4. We must beware that we suppose not that Gain is Godliness, for that were a strange supposition; yet the holy Ghost tells us some such there are, 1 Tim. 6. 5. We must not have such a supposition, nor go upon such a principle in labouring in our particular Calling. There are multitudes that labour for no other end but to get the Wealth of the world, as if that were the only thing that they were to minde; and that it is godliness: though, if they can but gain enough. But this is that which is a loathsome conceit, and savours of a base and sordid spirit, and comes from the earth, and will lead men to perdition and destruction: And the Apostle tells us that *Godliness is great gain*, in opposition to that supposition.

5. We must take heed that in labouring in our Callings we do not labour for our selves only, but to do good with what we get by our labour, Eph. 4. 28. Some there are that are wholly for themselves, and so they may but pocket

pocket up for themselves, and fill their own Coffers, they never regard the helping and succouring of others: but God would have us to attend our particular Callings, and so labour in them so, that we may do good to others, especially to those that stand in need of our help. Christ himself tells us this, that *the poor we have alwayes with us*, and when we will we may do them good, *Mark 14. 7.* intimating, that we are not to be all for our selves, but to do good to others that need. And so *Paul, Gal. 2. 10.* was forward to remember the poor.

6. We must beware that in labouring in our Callings we spend not what we so get in *rioting and drunkenness*, and upon our lusts. Many such there are, that get a great deal by labour in their Calling, but spend it all wastefully and prodigally, and consume it upon their lusts; and sometimes that they have got in a week or fortnight, they spend riotously in one day, or in one piece of day. We must take heed of this labour in our Calling, and what we get by a diligent hand, must be better laid out then upon our lusts, else we had as good have sate still, and done nothing.

7. We must take heed that in labouring in our Callings we forget not *what we should chiefly labour for*, *Joh. 6. 27.* we must not so much labour for *perishing meat*, but for that *that endureth to everlasting life*. So *Phil. 2. 12.* *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.* So *Heb. 4. 11.* *3 Pet. 1. 10.* these things are worth the labouring for. Other things that we labour about will not profit us when we die, nor in the *day of wrath*, *Prov. 11. 4.* but if we labour for *these things* that we are above all other things to attend unto, then we may have comfort in our other labour; and when we come to our rest in the dark night of death, we shall finde that our rest shall be sweet, and we shall reap the fruit of labour, and rejoyce that *we have not laboured in vain.*

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Use 1. for Information. We see that there is no footing in Scripture for that Heresie of the *Enchites*, that pretended to do nothing else but to Pray, and to make that their only calling; for God not only allows us, but looks for it from every one of us, that we should be busied in our particular Calling, and faithfully discharge the duties that God requires in that, as well as to attend our general Calling in the season of it. It is his will that we should attend both, and that one should not thrust out another, but God have glory from us in the due and faithful execution of the Lords will in both, that we may divide aright between the one and the other.

2. We see that idle persons that will not work at all, but spend their time in gaming, and eating, and drinking, and sleeping, and in tattling, and meddling with others, and are busy-bodies, are loathsome to God, and bring dishonour to the Gospel, and the Religion that they profess: for God looks for it from every one of us, that as we are to minde our general Calling, so we are to go about our particular Calling, and not to be wanting in the faithful discharge of the duties of it. We know what mischief that abundance of Idleness that was in Sodom brought upon them, it filled them full of fiery lusts, that cast them into the fire of hell; *Isa. 18. 7.* Idle persons that will not work with their hands, will be busy some other way; their

tongues will go, though their hands stir not, and they will be eatlers, if they be not workers, and do evil with their lips, though they move neither hand nor foot in the works that God calls them to labour in, 1 Tim. 5: 13. Idle persons are not idle in doing mischief, but are busy in doing the Devils work: but we must do Gods work, and not the Devils, except we wou<sup>d</sup> have the Devils wages, rather then that blessing and that God for Christs sake bestows upon us? ow and thus said

3. We see that diligence in our particular Calling, is that that God is well pleased with (taking in the *Cautions* before spoken of) Let us persevere in labour, and labour will be very acceptable to God. Abraham may go to his place, and do what he hath to do, when he hath been with God in Prayer. It's blessed work that we go about, when Prayer hath begun the work; the more we labour, then, the more smiles we have upon our labour from the God of heaven, and when our Lord comes, it will be happy for us to be found so doing: yea, if from obedience to God we are *marking faithfully*, we may with as much comfort die at that time, as if we had been performing some duty in our general Calling. Pray and work, hear and work, meditate in the Word and work; do all so in the duties of our general Calling, as that the duties of our particular Calling may be diligently attended to. Calvin when full of bodily infirmities



mities and pains, would not intermit his labours; because he would not be found idle when his Lord should come.

4. We see what cause we have to be thankful that God allows us and looks for it from us, that we should labor in our particular Calling, whereby we may get those things that are needful for the body; for we cannot want these things for the outward man. God is tender of our families, & comfort of our outward man, & would have us labour for that end; and it is his mercy that he allows us to go about our ordinary employment, that we may have our necessary food, and things convenient for the body. Our bodies, as they are part of Christ's Purchase, are dear to him, and he would not have them want any thing that's needful for them, that we may with comfort serve him in our pilgrimage here: and though they be but *coarages of clay*, yet he would have them upholden; though they be but the *sheaths of our Souls*, as Daniel calls them, Dan. 7. 15. yet he would not have this *sheath* marred or mangled, but kept in its beauty and comeliness; and that it may be so, he appoints us to labour, that what may tend to the preservation of it may be brought in, that the Soul and it, while they are joyned together, may glorifie God the more cheerfully, till death make a divorce betwixt them.

5. We see that they that abide not in their Calling, but step out of it, are not safe, but as Solomon

sayes, are in danger to be made a prey of, *Prov. 27.8. As a bird that wandreth from her nest, so is the man that wandreth from his place.* A mans calling is his nest, which while he keeps in, he is safely protected in by God and his holy Angels, but when he wanders from it, Satan that subtile fowler will shoot at him, and make a prey of him. No safety like that that a man hath when he is in his Calling, and no danger worse then that that he exposeth himself to, when he steps out of it.

6. We see that those Gentlemen that live without a Calling, and minde nothing but their hawkes and hounds, and cards and dice, and drunkenness, and wanton dalliances, are in an ill case, and will be found so when the Lord comes. God never intended that any mans recreation (though lawful) should be his occupation, much less that his carnal Delights should be his Calling. If they say, *They have enough, and need not labour*: I say, So had Adam in innocency, being Lord of all the World, yet then must labour, *Gen. 2. 15.* and after the fall, though he had much land, yet he was to labour more, *Gen. 3. 19.* Yea, the second Adam Christ Jesus, the Lord of heaven and earth, would not live without a Calling, *Mark 6. 3.* and after he was in the Ministry, how diligent was he? *Mat. 4. 23. Acts 10. 38.* and are there any so great as he? Let me say one word more: It's laid as a brand of Infamy upon those great ones to all generations, that

Doct. 31. for our lawful occasions. 313

that when others wrought hard, they put not their necks to the work of their Lord, Nehem. 3. 5.

Use 2. for *Terrour* to idle drones that God calls to work, 2 *Thess.* 3. 11. that work not at all, or that slack their work, how will they look him in the face, who hath given to every man his work? Mark 13. 34.

Use 3. for *Humiliation* to those of the Saints that work *boollie* in their particular Calling, as some in *London* and elsewhere, that would go from place to place to hear *Sermons*, and neglect their Callings: I say as Christ said in another case, *The one ought to be done, and the other should not be left undone*.

Use 4. for *Exhortation*: 1. To diligence in our particular callings, *Rom.* 12. 11. we shall be more with God, if we work more. 2. To be ashamed of our former sloth. 3. To bear mens reproaches. 4. To think sadly of that *Adm.* 25. 30. 5. To charge idle persons to work, 2 *Thess.* 3. 11.

Verse 33. And the Lord went his way, after he had *communed* with *Abraham*, &c.

Doct. XXXII. **T**hat Believers in praying to God are very familiar with him, with  
he with them.

When they pray, and the Lord makes answer, there is a sweet colloquy and communing betwixt them. For

For opening of which, let me shew, 1. *How Prayer may be said to be a communing with God, and Gods answers a communing with us.* 2. *What manner of communing it is.* 3. *Why God will vouchsafe to be thus familiar with us, and let us be so familiar with him.* 4. *The Uses.*

Q. 1. *How does it appear that our Prayer is a communing with God, and that his Answers are a communing with us?* Let me speak to the first: *That our Prayer is a communing with God.*

Ans. 1. *In that when we pray, we draw near to God; they that commune together, draw near first one to another. So Abraham drew near to God in Prayer, and so communed with God. [But of that I have fully spoken in the first Note.]*

2. *In that when we pray we come to a reconciled God, for else we could not familiarly commune with him: Can two walk together except they be agreed? sayes the Prophet, Amos 3. 3. We could not be familiar with God, nor he with us, except we come to a reconciled God in Jesus Christ.*

3. *In that when we pray we walk with God: so Enoch, Gen. 5, 22, 24. Prayer was one path that he walk'd with God in. Now they that walk together, do familiarly commune one with another; so it is between God and us.*

4. *In that when we pray we take hold of God, Isa. 64. 7. and they that take hold of one another, and take one another by the hand, are in a fit posture*

possune to commune one with another: so here.

5. In that when we pray to God we are *Princes and Providers* with him, Gen. 32. 28. with *Hose 12. 3, 4.* and that shews that we commune with the Lord in the duty.

6. In that when we pray to God we plead with him, and that holds out our communing with him. They that plead at the Barre before a Judge, commune with him: so they that plead with God. *Job 16. 21.* O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbour: and *23. 3, 4.* O that I knew where I might finde him, that I might come even to his seat: I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with argument. Prayer is pleading, and argumentative pleading, & that way we commune with God.

But how does it appear that God communes with us in granting our Requests?

1. In that when he grants our requests he listens to what we say when we pray, and answers us, and so communes with us; so does one man to another, and so does God to us.

2. In that when he grants us our requests he smiles upon us, and accepts our prayers, as men do that commune one with another, *1 Per. 2. 5.*

3. In that when he grants our requests he draws near to us, *Jam. 4. 8.* as they do that have colloquy and communing one with another.

4. In that when he grants our requests he is pleased



pleased with us, as they are that commune lovingly together one with another. See Gen. 33. 10.

5. In that when he grants our requests he loves our company and fellowship, and gives us a pledge of it hereby, as they do that commune one with another. God and Believers are good company. Believers when they pray shew that they love Gods company; and God when he grants their requests shews that he loves theirs.

6. In that when he grants their requests he declares that he respects and accepts their persons, as they do that lovingly converse together, and commune one with another, Gen. 4. 4. Eph. 1. 6. Princes will not grant their Petitions whose persons are not in favour with them; but when they are accepted, and in favour, they may have any thing: So here.

Q. 2. What manner of communing is it?

A. 1. It is a serious communing; we are serious with God when we pray to him, and do not trifle with him; and he is serious with us when he grants us what we sue unto him for, he does not word it with us but is very real with us, and sayes no more then he will certainly do for us: he will fulfil with his hand, what he speaks with his mouth, 1 Kings 8. 24. Even Balaam (when guided by a better Spirit then his own) could say, Num. 23. 19. God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he

be not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? Men may say in word, and unsay what they have said in their deed; (so trifling, and vain, and false they are) but it is not so with God, he is serious in what he sayes, and will make good all he sayes in a promising way to us. If a Kings grant be given out, it is for his honour to see it performed, *Ezra 6.12. I Darins have made a decree, let it be done with speed:* how much more will the Lord be serious with us when he gives out any grants to us?

2. It is a sweet and comfortable communing; when we pray we sweetly converse with him: *sweet is thy voice, Cant. 2.14.* and when he grants our requests he sweetly converseth with us. Never was there any sweetness between the dearest relations, like that that is between the Lord and us, when we pray to him, and he grants our requests that we put up to him. There is much sweetness between husband and wife, between father and childe in their communing together; but no sweetness like to that that is betwixt the Lord and us when we pray to him, and he grants our requests to us: Our prayers are sweet Odours, *Rev. 5.8.* and his grants are so many sweet smiles of his face, and so many sweet kisses of his mouth, and so many amiable and sweet glances and casts of his eye towards us, or so many sweet words of his mouth, that like sweet wine chear our hearts.

3. It is an *holy communing*: if ever we be *holy*, it is so with us when we pray to the Lord, we lift up *holy hands to him*, 1 Tim. 2. 8. and *holy hearts*, 1 Sam. 4. 8. *holiness becomes us at all times*, but then more especially when we pray to the *holy One*: and when the Lord grants our requests (as he is alwayes holy, so) he remembers his *holy promise* to us, and that *holy Covenant* that he hath made with us, and so our mutual communing is an *holy communing*. When two gracious ones are speaking and communing together, Oh what *holy breathings* are there uttered forth between them, their *speeches* are seasoned with holiness, and argue *holy hearts*: but when God and we commune together, there is no holiness like that, an *holy God* and an *holy Soul* breathe out much holiness in communing one with another.

4. It is a *friendly communing*: We are *friends to God* (if believers,) Jam. 2. 23. and when we pray in faith we *friendly commune* with him, and God is a friend to us: and when he grants our requests, he does like a friend to us, and in a friendly manner does commune with us. There is no friendship on earth, in all the *communings* that are between men and men, comparable to that friendly communing that is between God and us when we pray to him, and when he grants our desires to us. Great hath been that friendship

Ship that hath been between some men, as both sacred and heathen stories tell us, and their communings together have been very friendly: Jonathan and David were very friendly, 2 Sam. 1. 26. 1 Sam. 29. 16. & 20. 41. So Heathen Authors tell us of Damon and Pythias, of Pitados and Orestes, that have been great friends, and been full of love one to another; but no friendship like to that that is between the Lord and the believing Soul; no friendly communings like theirs, when the soul is in a praying frame, and when the Lord grants the desires of such a soul.

5. It is an *humble communing*; when we pray, we humble and lay our selves low before God, as Abraham did that looked at himself as vile dust and ashes: humility does alwayes become us, but never more then when we pray to the high God: we never behave our selves so humbly as when we speak to such a Prince as he is, and when God grants our requests he humbles himself in condescending to look at such vile worms as we are, and to have respect to the petitions that we put up to him. God humbles himself when he beholds the things that are done in Heaven, when he looks at what the Angels and blessed Souls do for him, in praising and yielding obedience to him: but when he beholds what is done upon Earth, by such as we are, and accepts our prayers, and grants us what we petition for;

Oh

Oh how low does he stoop, and how does he humble himself, that we may commune with him, and he vouchsafes thus to commune with us, and to be so familiar with us, we may well say, *Who is a God like our God?* *Psal. 113. 5, 6.* to be sure whatever our failings be, and how short soever we fall of humbling our selves before him, he exceedingly humbleth himself, and condescends and comes very low to us.

6. It is a *gracious communing*; when we pray we utter gracious words; grace is in our lips, and grace bubbles from the fountain of our hearts: as we sing with grace in our hearts, *Col. 3. 16.* When we pray, we pray with grace from our hearts, and hence it is that these two are coupled together, *Zech. 12. 10.* a spirit of grace and of supplication. The same spirit that is a spirit of supplication, is a spirit of grace in us. But when the Lord hears us, and grants our requests, and that way communes with us, Oh how gracious is he to us! *Exod. 22. 27.* There are gracious communings between man and man sometimes, so as that they are in heaven together up on earth; but there are no such gracious communings as is between the Lord and us, when we pray and he grants.

7. It is a *glorious communing*. Oh the divine lustre that is in our faces sometimes when we have been at Prayer! Oh the glorious beauty that is



is then seen in our very countenances ! look as it was with Christ himself, so it was with us : it is said of him, *Luk. 9. 29. as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered ;* there was great glory seen upon it, so it is with us sometimes when we pray there is a kind of heavenly glory sparkles in our faces, and when he grants our requests, and commun's that way with us, Oh how glorious is he in his grace and mercy to us ! how gloriously does he dispense himself to us ? it is a glorious communing : he glorifies himself, and puts glory upon us thereby.

Q. 3. *Why will God be so familiar with us, and suffer us to be so familiar with him ?*

A. First, *From the Lord. 1. He is Love, 1 Joh. 4. 8.* and they that are most loving, will be most familiar with them that they love. Now God being originally, primarily, eminently, transcendently, essentially, everlastingly love to his believing ones ; hence it is that he is so familiar with them, as to commune in so friendly a way with them. Love is ever the efficient procreant and conserving cause of familiarity between man and man, and Gods love is that that makes him so familiar as to commune with us.

2. *He is abundant in goodness, Exod. 34. 6.* and the more a man abounds in goodness, the more familiar he will be to those that are dear to him, he will commune with them, and make himself

very familiar with them : and so it is with the Lord, his *abundant goodness* makes him have sweet familiarity, so as to commune with us, though we be sinful *dust and ashes*.

3. He is such an one as *humbleth himself* in an *unparallel'd way*, Psal. 113. 5, 6. and humble ones are very familiar with those they delight in. Proud persons scorn to be familiar with their inferiours, but humble ones will come low this way, they will take their inferiours by the hand, and talk & commune familiarly with them ; how much more will God do it, who does so humble himself that none may be compared to him therein?

4. He is a *Father in Christ Jesus* to us, and therefore will be familiar with us : Fathers are familiar with their children, will *speak* familiarly, and *commune* with them, and *grant* their desires ; so will the Lord familiarly commune with us, and grant us our desires that we ask of him, 1 *Joh.* 5. 14, 15. there's no father on earth that will be so familiar with his children, as he will be with us, though there be such an infinite distance between him and us.

5. He is an *Husband* to us, Isa. 54. 5, and there's no greater familiarity in the world then is between husband & wife, how much more then between the Lord and us? he will vouchsafe to commune with us in giving in all we desire of him. *Esther's* husband which was a great *Monarch*, so sweetly & familiarly

familiarly conversed with her, that shee might have any thing that shee desired of him, *Esth. 5. 3* and what then may not we expect from the Lord, that doth more familiarly commune thus with us then any husband in the world that is most dear to his spouse?

¶ 6. He is *our friend*, Cant. 5. 19. and therefore is so sweetly familiar with us. A friend will be very familiar, so will the Lord be, and give us all we sue unto him for; Friendship carries familiarity ever along with it. A friend is as dear as a mans own soul; and lies next the soul, and will be familiar whoever is not; such a friend is the Lord, he will be familiar with us, and though he will be reserved to others, and carry himself as a stranger to them, yet he will be very familiar with his own.

But in the second place, *why will he suffer us to be so familiar with him?*

Ans. 1. We are those that are a people *near* to him, Psal. 148. 14. and though sometimes we were *far off*, are made *nigh* by the blood of Christ *Ephes. 2. 13.* and will he not suffer us that are so *nigh* him to be familiar with him? he will surely let us commune in a familiar and friendly way with him. They that are near the King, as they of the Council and Bed-chamber be, they may speak familiarly to him and bring their Petitions before him: so may we that are so *nigh* to the Lord.

2. We that are believers are they that finde favour in his eyes, and to whom he holds out the golden scepter of his grace, as that King did to *Esther*, *Esth.* 5. 2. and therefore may draw near, and touch the top of the Scepter as she did, and make our Petitions boldly and familiarly to him. They that are in favour with a Prince may be familiar with him, and He of his Princely grace will suffer them so to be: how much more may we that are in favour with God, who is infinitely above all the gracious Princes in the earth for grace and favour?

3. We are they that he will admit to greatest and sweetest familiarity in another world, that he will lay us in his everlasting arms, and put us in his bosome, no familiarity will be like that, when we shall be ever with the Lord, *1 Thess.* 4. 17. and see his face, and be transformed into his image, *1 Joh.* 3. 2. Now God would give us a pledge of that then by suffering us to be familiar with him now. [*But of this I shall speak more when I come to the Uses.*]

4. We are united to him by the Spirit through Faith, *1 Cor.* 6. 17. and Union ever takes in Communion and Familiarity with it. It is so in all the Unions that we can name in the world, and so it is in this Mystical and Spiritual Union between the Lord and us; we have sweetest communion, and most familiar acquaintance and fellowship

lowship with him by being so united to him: they that are one flesh, as man and wife are, are familiar one with another, how much more then are they that are joyned to the Lord, and so are one spirit.

5. We are his *chosen ones* that he delighted in from all eternity, *Ephes. 1. 4. Prov. 8. 31.* and they that he hath set his *Electing love* upon, he will suffer to be familiar with him; they that are our *choise ones* that we have set our hearts upon, we are willing that they should be familiar with us, and that in a *friendly way* they should commune with us: now such are we to God, and therefore he will suffer us to be familiar with him.

6. We are they that *he challengeth a propriety in, Isa. 43. 1. Thou art mine:* we are his every way, by right of *Creation*, by right of *Redemption*, by right of *Dominion* and *Sovereignty* over us, by right of *Power* over us, as the *Potter* hath over his clay, by right of *Esponsage* of us to himself: name any *right* that we can, he hath true title to us and interest in us, and so reciprocally have we in him, *Cant. 6. 3. I am my beloveds and he is mine:* now he being *ours* and we *his* all these wayes, what marvel is it if he suffer us to be familiar and to commune with him?

Use 1. for *Information.* 1. We see the great condescendency of the great God, that he will



stoop so low as to commune with *dust and ashes*, and to suffer us to be familiar with him, in communing and speaking in prayer to him. Oh the infinite distance that is betwixt the Lord and us? we are not able to conceive it, much less to express it: what's a drop of a *Bucket* to the great *Ocean*? what's a *Candle* to the *Sun*? what's a small *dust of the ballance* to the whole *Earth*? what's a *little spark* to a great *flaming Fire*? what's *nothing* and less then *nothing*, to him that is *all*, and in *all*, and infinitely above all *created Beings*? these are some Scripture resemblances to set forth, and shadow out the *infinite distance* that is between the great God and all nations, *Isai. 40.* that therefore this infinite one should vouchsafe to be familiar with us, and to commune with us, and to suffer us to be so familiar with him, as to speak in Prayer to him and commune with him, it is great condescendency in him, and *that* that we may well wonder at, that he should so humble himself, whence is this to us? what can we say in way of admiring at it? our words and our thoughts must needs be all swallowed up in *consideration of it.*

2. We see what an holy *blush* this may put into our faces, that we are so little familiar with him in praying to him, but keep *far from him* too often, when we have leave and liberty to *commune with him*: there are too many that re-

strain

strain prayer before God, *Job 15. 4.* and when he would admit them into his acquaintance, and let them be familiar with him, they have to do *here and there*, about *this and that* and the other outward occasions, and so men let go the best blessing of sweet familiarity with the blessed God. Might a man be admitted to be familiar with a Prince, would he not accept it with all humble gratitude, would he decline it? Oh how unworthily do we then carry it to the great God, that when we may familiarly commune with the Lord, we decline his company, and minde other matters which are not worth a straw under our feet in comparison of this sweet colloquy and communing with the Lord our God?

3. We see that great pride that is in many of the sons of men, that scorn to come in company with men of an *inferiour rank*, and with those that are a *little under them*, and will not speak to them: doth the great God humble himself to speak to us and commune with us, and shall worms despise their fellow worms? I tell all such, though they be *silk-worms*, yet they be but worms, and an *earth-worm* will prove as good as a *silk-worm*, and it may be better in the day of death and judgement. If God stoops low, it is not for vain man to lift up himself or look high. Will he commune with us, and let us commune with him? we may well then stoop to commune

with those that are some way *lower* then we are. That the Angels that are greater in dignity then we should incamp about us, *Psal. 34. 7.* and minister to us, *Heb. 1. 14.* shews that they are *humble ones*: but that the great God should familiarly commune with, and let us commune with him, he comes down *low* to us, and therefore it is a shame to us to be proud, and lift up our selves above our brethren. The King himself is forbidden this, *Dent. 17. 20.*

4. We see what a mercy of God it is that he will be so familiar as to commune with us, and to suffer us to commune with him; we are not worthy to come into his *presence*, to put up any request to him, to have any thing to do with him, to bring any suit before him, *Ezek. 9. 6.* *unworthy of the least of his mercies*, *Gen. 32. 10.* that therefore he should be pleased to commune with us, and admit us to commune with him, it is a wonder of his mercy to us: our sins might justly bar us out of his *presence*, and cause him to withdraw himself from us, so as that he should not suffer us to speak to him, nor to regard any thing that we say in his ears; but he is *merciful*, and will not turn away our Prayer nor his mercy from us, but will let us familiarly commune with him, and himself will commune with us in granting our desires to us.

5. We see what delight we should have in the duty

duty of Prayer, wherein we talk and commune with God, he *delights in it* himself, *Prov. 15. 8.* and why should not we delight in it? friends delight to commune one with another, Husband and Spouse to talk together: if God therefore delight in their *holy communing* together, and looks at it as *musick* and *melody* in his eares; we should take delight in it. *Musical Instruments* are said to be the delights of the *Sons of Men*, *Ecc. 2. 8.* If Prayer therefore be as a *musical Instrument* to delight God, it is meet we should be delighted with it.

6. We see that if there be such sweet communing between God and us here, Oh what communing shall we have with him in a state of *glory in another World*: that will be a delightful communing indeed. If God take pleasure in our Prayers here, O what pleasure will he have in our praises there? here what we do in this duty is *imperfect service* and hath many *blemishes* and *spots* cleaving to it, but there all imperfections shall be done away, and our praises and obedience shall be in its *acme* and perfection, and what sweet communings we shall have with our God we as yet cannot tell, for *1 Joh. 3. 2.* Yet it doth not appear what we shall be: our familiarity with God will then be at the highest, when we shall be put in his bosom and lie near his heart, and be clasped in his everlasting arms to all eternity;  
Then,

Then, then our familiarity will be increased with him, and his with us : friends by being long together here finde their friendship and familiarity to grow; husband and wife that have been in that relation many years, how is their sweet familiarity augmented and raised up to the highest pitch : the like I might say of other friends. Oh but how exceeding great then will the familiarity of the *blessed God* be to us, and ours to him, when he and we shall be together to all eternity ! *death* parts the *dearest relations* here, and puts an end to their *sweetest communings* together, and breaks off their *sweetest discourse* and *familiarity* that they have had one with another ; but that familiarity that will be between God and us in a *state of glory*, will never be broken off, but after *millions* and *myriads* of years be gone, will hold out and continue for ever and ever. Happy *they* that come to this, thrice happy *they* that come to the enjoyment of it. There are some *dear ones* that live long together ; as it is said of *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, that *they lived very long together* ; and some in the *old world* among the *Patriarks*, some of which lived almost *a thousand years*, and these must needs have familiarity long together : but this is nothing to what the Saints shall enjoy in *glory* ; for there will be *no end* nor *period* put to that, but it shall be *everlasting*. Our familiarity in the *length of it* here, is not so much as a drop



drop to the Ocean of Eternity.

Use 2. for *Terrour* to all those that are *Unbelievers*, they have no familiarity with God, nor he with them; they *commune* not with him in *praying* to him, nor he with them in *granting* their desires to them. They have familiarity with their *lusts*, and with the world, and the things of the world, and with *Satan* the god of the world, and with the *lewd companions* of the world; these they *commune* with, but have no communing with God. Their company that they shall have another day will be sad company; *Devils* and *Damned ones* will be their companions, and what *communings* they will have in Hell together, if they repent not, they had need consider of.

Use 3. for *Humiliation* to the *Saints*, that have too little familiarity with the Lord, and do not so often *commune* with him as they ought and might. Many a fair opportunity they have to meet with God, and he with them, and to have sweetest colloquies and *communings* together, but other things *step in*, and *take up* such mens time that they should have with God, and their thoughts are busied too much about the matters of this life, and so (though they do not wholly lose their acquaintance with him, yet) they have not so much familiarity with him as they might have from day to day; their *communings* are neither so frequent, nor so sweet as they might be, did they

they not minde other things too much. Let it shame all such, for there's no familiarity like his; when men have tried it, they shall finde that *one dayes familiarity with God*, will be better then a *thousand* with either the *men* or the *things* of the *World*.

Use 4. for Exhortation: 1. To be much in *communings with God here*, and in holding up *familiarity with him*, that he may be *familiar with us*, and commune with us in his *grants*, as we do with him in our *suits*. We can never finde such a friend to *open* our hearts to, to *unbosome* our Souls to, to *tell* our wants and ailes to, to *make known* our pressures, afflictions, calamities, perplexities of spirit, discouragements and temptations to, as *he is*; there's no friend on earth that will so *pity* us, *relieve* us, *succour* and *sustain* us, *commiserate* and *sympathize* with us, be *afflicted in all our afflictions*, as he will. Good therefore it is for us to *pour out* our hearts before him, to *shew* him all our *troubles*, to *discover* all our *wants*, *weaknesses*, to *confess* all our *infirmities*, *deformities*, *out-strayings* and *out-lyings* from him; and to *tell* him of all that does *pinch* us, and *press* us, and *lye hard* upon us, and to *intreat* him to *bring in relief* to us in his own time. Such *communings* we should have with God, and such *familiarity* with him would make our worst condition *happy* to us. It's said of the Emperour

Charles the Fifth, That he spake more to God then to men.

2. To long after those sweet communings that we shall have in heaven, and that familiar converse that we shall have with him in another world. We have, through grace, a little of his company here, and he communes familiarly with us, and we with him; some smiles of his face, and intimations of his favour; some tokens of his friendship, some sweet imbraces, some peepings into the Holy of Holies, some fruits of the delights of Paradise he gives us by our acquaintance with him, and his with us; some tastes of heavens sweets we have in our holy communings together now, but when we come in glory, then our familiarity will be in the altitude and sublimity of it, we shall lye continually between his breasts, we shall have his heart open to us, and all his bosome-love and bosome-secrets revealed to us: we shall be brought into the Kings palace, sit at his Table, be taken into the bed of love, enjoy marriage-fellowship, partake in everlasting communion with the blessed God, and have our fill of his presence and favour, and be as familiar as one dear friend is with another. What longings and breathings then should we have after this blessed estate? and how long should we think it to be before the day of God come? how should we say, as Siseras Mother, why is his charret so long in coming? why tarry the wheels of  
his

*his charret ? we should earnestly long after that day, wherein so much familiarity is to be had with him. We desire acquaintance with some that we take to be our friends, and say to this and that man, Sir, I desire further acquaintance with you ; and we would be more familiar with such : Oh what desires should we then have after further acquaintance and familiarity with the blessed God in a blessed state of glory ! we can never breathe enough in our desires after this. If David did so pants in his desires after the presence of God in his House here, Psal. 42. 1, 2. Oh what panting desires should we have after the presence of God, and for those familiar communings and conversings with him in an happy state of glory !*

3. To be thankful to him, and render everlasting praises to him, that will vouchsafe to commune with us, and suffer us to commune with him. Who are we, that there should be such familiarity between the blessed God and such worthless worms as we, that are unworthy to be looked upon, to be trod upon by him ? Low men are afraid to come where those that are above them be, and fear to speak to them ; but though the distance be infinite between God and us, yet he is pleased to give us leave familiarly to commune with him, and to let us speak in his ears all that we have to desire of him : Let our hearts and mouthes be filled with his praise for this. As *Joab* (2 Sam. 14. 22.)

14.22) thanked the King for granting his request which he had intreated for in the woman of Tiro's parabolical communing with him: so much more are we to be thankful to God, who familiarly communes with us in granting, and gives us leave to be familiar with him in praying; there's no praise on our part is sufficient for him. Solomon made it a wonder that God should dwell with men, 2 Chron. 6. 18. But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? what he said of dwelling, let me say of speaking and communing, Will God in very deed commune with men on the earth? it is to admiration that it should be so, it is a wonder of his grace that it is so, and therefore heart and soul, and all that is within us, should bless his holy Name for it.

4. To take all opportunities to go to God in this duty of Prayer, sweetly and familiarly to commune with him. Many a golden season he puts into our hands, but we want hearts to come before him. Oh Brethren, we should be often in the duty, beleaguer the Throne of Grace, take it out in communing with God, be frequent at it, and unwearied in it: it is our priviledge that we may have leave to come, and we should count it our duty to come as often as any opportunity is offered to us. Is there any thing that we have to do in the world so necessary as to speak to God? Is there any thing so delightful as to commune

With



*with him?* one hours communing with him, is better then all the best company in the world: it is the *best hour* that ever we spent in our lives, if we be serious with him in it; and therefore no time is to be *neglected*, but every season *redeemed* for such a work, 1 *Thess.* 5. 17. *Rom.* 12. 12.

5. To *commune with our own hearts*, before we come to commune with him; and to *muse* ~~much~~ what hearts we bring before him, and what *neglects* have been of preparing them before we have come before him, and *how* often we have in former times carried our selves otherwise then becomes such an holy and glorious Majesty as as we have *talked with*; how our hearts have been *gone*, when we have *spoken to him with our lips*, and have *gadded* after other things, that have made the duty *unprofitable* to us, and *unserviceable* to him. These and the like things we are to commune with our own hearts about what we *have been formerly*, before we commune with God and he with us, in the duty of Prayer.

6. To behave our selves in the duty, as making account that we are to *speake with God*, and to behave our selves accordingly. Q. *How?*

*Ans.* 1. *Humbly*: Humility becomes us when we speak to those that are greater then we, much more when we are to *speake to*, and *commune with the great God*, *Psal.* 10. 17. 2. *Reverentially*: Reverence is behoovefull when we speak to a

Prince;

Prince, much more when we come to speak with God, *Heb. 12. 28.* 3. *Wisely*: they had need be wise, and weigh their words, that speak in the hearing of *some men*; Oh what wisdom then is meet to speak in the ears of the *high God*? *Eccles. 5. 2.* we are to weigh our words as we do gold, there should not be a grain wanting. 4. *Spiritually*: all carnal cogitations, affections, dispositions, should be then laid aside, when we are to commune with God, who is a Spirit, and will be worshipped in spirit and truth, *Joh. 4. 24.* 5. *Seriously*: the duty is serious, and as in other serious businesses we are not to trifle, much less in this.

*Uses for Consolation*: 1. *Privitively.* 2. *Positively.*

First, *Privitively.* 1. To those that are deprived of all company with others, and cannot have leave or liberty to speak or commune with any that might be a comfort to them: here's *this comfort* for them, That though they cannot commune with *men*, yet then they may speak to, and commune with *the Lord himself*, and he with them. Some sick persons may be left *alone*, and none may come at them, to minister any comfort to their souls, or to speak a word in season to them; but then they may have liberty to speak to the Lord, and to commune with him, and he will speak to them; and there's no com-  
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muning with the *best of men*, like this that is with the Lord. Prisoners that are *shut up close*, that may not have any admitted to come and speak to them, but are left *alone*, and none permitted to speak through the *grates* to them, yet these may speak to God, and he can come into the Prison to them, and sweetly commune with them, and be in stead of, and better then all the *best company* to them, as he was to *Paul* and *Silas* in the dungeon, *Acts 16*. Some are *shut up in their spirits*, as *Heman* was, *Psal. 88. 8*. and cannot get forth; but the Lord can give them so much liberty as to speak and commune in prayer with him, as he did; and God himself communes with them, as he did with him. Some are left so alone, as that all forsake them, as they did *Paul*, *2 Tim. 1. 15. & 4. 16*. but then God is not gone, when all are gone; *ver. 17*. *Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me*. In such a case when Christians are left of all, and not a man is to be found to speak one word to chear up our hearts, yet God is left, and he will sweetly commune with us, and strengthen us to do and suffer what he calls us to. As Christ sayes to his disciples, *You shall all be scattered and leave me, yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me*, *Joh. 16. 32*. So it is with us, when all are scattered from us, and we left alone, yet we are not alone, but the Lord is with us: we cannot have a word from

from men, but we may speak many to the Lord. As it is said of that Emperour Charles the Fifth, That he spake more words to God then he did to men. He was a devout man indeed, in his way of a Papist, but whether the report be true or no, I leave that, *set fides penes authorem*: onely I may make this use of it, That there are some in the world that are so familiar with God, that they do indeed speak more words to Him then they do to men, and they may have comfort in it.

12. To those that are deprived of their yoke-fellows, Husbands have been taken from their wives, and wives from their Husbands, that they have had sweetest and dearest familiarity with: though these be gone, and death hath broken the knot of family and sweet communing that they had one with another while they were together, yet they that are left alive may still commune with the Lord, and be with them, and that is better to them then all the conversings and communings then ever they had when they were together one with another. God and they are better company then ever Husband and Wife were: as long as God is not gone, though Husband and Wife be gone, all is well. There may be all, and above all taken out of the Fountain, when such Cisterns are crack'd and broken: My wife is gone, (may the Husband say) but my God remains with

me. *My Husband is gone*, may the Wife say, but my *Maker which is my Husband*, Isa. 54. 5. *does still abide with me.* I can no more speak to my Husband, nor commune sweetly with him as I was wont to do, he is gone; but my God is alive, and *lives for ever*, so long as I live I may commune with him, and he will vouchsafe of his grace to commune with me. And is not this comfort, that I may drink *Fountain-water* when the *brooks are dried up?*

3. To those that are *deprived of other Relations*: Parents may have their Children taken away from them, and Children may lose their Parents; Brethren may be taken from Brethren, and Sisters may be removed by death from Sisters, and one Friend from another, which is as dear as a mans own Soul, and all that intimacy and sweetest communing that they had together may be dissolved, and all their dear embraces, and loving converses and commerces may be put an end unto; but here's comfort, though the Parent may say, *I have lost my Child*, yet my God is where he was, he abides by me, though the Child may say, *My Parent is taken away from me*, yet my God forsakes me not; though I cannot speak any more to these, yet I bless the Lord I can speak to him daily, open my heart to him, put up my suits into his bosome, commune with him in my most retired Closet, and have him communing with



me night and day. So though a Friend may say, I have lost the best acquaintance I have in this world, my dearest Jewel among men is plucked out of my bosome, my friend that I loved as my own soul is suddenly snatched away from me; yet thanks be to God, he continues with me, though my dear friend and I shall never change a word more in this world, though we that were so intimate and full of love together, that we often had our walks together, and imparted to one another our very souls in communing each with other, yet now I and he must never do it more, never have an hours discourse, nor a minutes time together more; yet, for ever be the Name of the Lord exalted, I have him as a friend to repair to at all times, and while I live I can go and commune with him. This is sweetest comfort in the parting of such dear Relations, the knot of familiarity between God and them is never broken, though all others snap asunder.

4. To those Believers that are deprived of the Ordinances, and shut out from enjoying the fellowship of them, as David and others have been. This is indeed one of the worst afflictions that can befall us in this world, which made David so pant, *Psal. 42. 1.* and faint, and long for the presence of God in the enjoyment of them, and to envy the very Sparrow and Swallow, that made their Nests so near Gods Altars, and himself was so farre from them, *Psa. 8 1. 2, 3.*

yet here is *comfort*, though we be deprived of these, and be driven where they are not to be enjoyed, yet if God in such a case be a *little Sanctuary*, as he hath promised, *Ezek. 11. 16.* and if he refuse not to commune with us, nor to let us commune with him, he can be in stead of *all Ordinances*, and *above them all*, and can speak to us some other way, if not in *publick*, yet in a more *private way*, as he did to those godly Jews in *Babylon*, when they met in the *Clefts of the Rocks*, and in the *secret places of the stairs*, and there had sweet Communion with him, and he with them. *Phinehas* his wife bewailed the taking of the Ark, and said, *The glory is departed from Israel, for the Ark of God is taken*, *1 Sam. 4. 22.* she might well have said so, if God had been gone too; but she doted too much upon the *Means*, and so may we. If God himself be not gone, though *Publick means* should fail for a time, yet God can tell yet how to commune with us, and let us commune with him, and that is *Comfort*.

*Positive comforts from hence.*

1. **I**F when we pray, and the Lord grant our desires, we commune with him, and he with us, we are *very familiar with him*, and he with us; then surely Believers are in *highest esteem* with the Lord; for the greatest men upon earth if they be not such, cannot have this privilege granted to them. Kings have their *privileges*, and they stand much upon them; but no King on earth, if he walk not in the steps of *Abrahams faith*, can have this *royal prerogative* to *commune with the Lord*, or to have the Lord to *commune with him*, *Psalm 94. 20.* this is peculiar to true believers that they may have this fellowship with the Lord, and the Lord with them, that they may sweetly commune one with another. Great is the *esteem* that such have with the great God, that he will vouchsafe to speak with them, and let them be so familiar with him, as to speak with him. It's comfort, that though we be thus *low* as we are, yet we are in *high esteem* with him.

2. That it is no matter though some men will not speak to us, nor suffer us to speak to them, God does both; he graciously will commune with us, and will not disdain that we should familiarly commune with him: if *dust*

and *ashes* will have no familiarity with their fellow-dust and *ashes*, it is well for us that the great God does not refuse to be familiar with us, though we be but (as *Abraham* stiled himself) *dust and ashes*. If man contemns and God honour, what need we care for such contempt? If a *shrub* lift up himself, and the highest *Cedar* stoop to such as we are, as it should be marvellous in our eyes, so it may well be the joy and rejoicing of our hearts.

3. If God vouchsafe to commune with us, and let us commune with him, then we begin *Heaven upon Earth*, and have a taste of Heaven before we come there; to commune with God, is *Heaven upon Earth*: they live in Heaven that have such familiarity with God, though they be on Earth. And as that gracious man said when he was to dye, *I shall change my place, but not my company*; so it may be said of others that have had much fellowship with the Lord, when they dye they change their place, but not their company, to go from one heaven to another, from *heaven upon earth* in their communing with God here, to *Heaven in another World*, to be with him in glory forever. And is not this sweetest comfort to the Saints, that whereas the greatest number of men live in *Hell upon Earth*, having fellowship with Devils; Believers by being much with God are in a corner of *Heaven upon Earth*?

4. It is great comfort to Believers that the time is *hasting* when (as they have had sweet communings with the Lord here, so) they shall enjoy everlasting communion with him in glory: It is but a little while, and the time will be when *we shall be ever with the Lord*: when a few dayes are come, we shall have other manner of communings with him, and he with us, then now we have. As Dr. *Taylor* sometimes said, with rejoicing, *within two stiles, and I shall be at my Fathers house*; so after a little time we shall go to God, where we shall be better acquainted with him, and be more familiar with him: that though our communings together be very *sweet* here, yet ere long we shall have *sweeter* fellowship one with another: here we have some *smiles*, and *kisses*, and such communings as put us in Heaven; but within a little time we shall have more: after a few wearisome *agitations and conflicts* with enemies and troubles, we shall rest in his armes, and be alwayes in his presence, and lye next his heart, and what communings we shall then have together, we shall then know when we come to the happy enjoyment of our God; then *all tears shall be wiped from our eyes*, all sorrows removed from our hearts, all burthens taken from our shoulders, we shall *sigh no more*, nor *weep no more*, nor *feel pain any more*, nor *sin any more*; no Devils shall tempt



tempt us, no men ensnare us, no bad company weary, discontent, afflict us, no persecutors hunt us, entangle us, entrap us, go about to ruine us: but we shall be with God, and he with us; commune of high things, and what we could not know in our child-hood, we shall have revealed to us when we become men, 1 Cor. 13. 9, 10, 11, 12. To end in a word or two more, after we have been tossed with tempest a little while, we shall come to the Haven; after we have been in the battel we shall gain the victory; after we have wrestled, we shall win and wear the Crown; and after a few embraces in the arms of God here, in our fellowship that we have with him in this world, we shall be clasped in his everlasting arms, and be kissed and embraced by him to all Eternity.

Quest. But how shall we come to know that this happy condition shall be ours?

Ans. 1. By our Holiness, Matth. 5. 8. 1 John 3. 2, 3. Holy here, Happy hereafter: Without Holiness we shall never see God, Hebr. 12. 14. but if we be holy in body and spirit, we shall see him with comfort, and have everlasting fellowship with him. Holiness is the Beauty of Heaven, for they are all holy there; and none that are defiled come into the holy place,

Doct. 32. *are familiar with God.* 347

place, *Psal. 24. 3, 4.* No Leper was to come into the holy Camp of old; even *Miriam* her self, till she was healed, must be shut out, *Numb. 12. 14.* how much more then must all defiled leproous Souls be shut out of Heaven? Look therefore to our Holiness.

2. By our *Uprightness of heart*, *Psal. 18. 1, 2.* Hypocrites shall be cast out, and rejected, *Mat. 7. 23.* they cannot escape the damnation of Hell, *Matth. 23. 33.* they heap up wrath, *Job 36. 13.* But they that are upright, as they have good things in possession here, so they shall be happy in another world; as they walk surely here, *Prov. 10. 9.* so they shall be sure of a blessed state, in glory.

3. By our *Obedience*, *Matth. 7. 21.* *Heb. 5. 9.* Disobedience brings destruction with it, *2 Thess. 1. 8, 9.* but they that obey from the heart out of faith shall be saved. Obedient Children inherit their Fathers Estate: so shall we, if we be obedient, possess our Fathers Estate in glory.

4. By our *Victory over our sins, and other Enemies*, *Revel. 3. 21.* Conquerours win the Crown and wear it. They that overcame in the Olympick Games got the Prize, and had the

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the *Crown*, and they obtained but a *corruptible Crown*; but ours will be an *incorruptible one*, 1 Cor. 9. 25.

5. By our *Patience in well-doing*, Rom. 2. 7. Heb. 10. 36, 37. *Constancy and Patience* is ever honoured with the *Crown*, Rev. 2. 10. they that hold out without *fainting in Running or Wrestling*, had the glory of the *Reward* that they strove for: so shall we, if we hold out to the end, Matth. 24. 13. Look to this therefore, that we quit our selves like men, and hold out to the last.

6. By our *love to God*, 1 Jam. 1. 12. if eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man to conceive what God hath prepared for them that love him, in Gospel promises here, 1 Cor. 2. 9. then surely no eye ever saw, nor ear ever heard, neither ever came it into the heart of man to conceive the things that he hath prepared for them that love him, in another World in glory. If we have so much in the conduit-pipe and cistern, what shall we have when we are at the spring and well-head? If we enjoy so much in the wilderness, what shall we have in *Heavenly Canaan*? If the first fruits be such, what will the full harvest be? If the gleaning grapes be such, what will the whole vintage be? Surely it will be with shouting,



shouting, and greatest joy and consolation. Look we therefore to our *love to God*, and let that fire never go out, but like the fire of the Altar to *burn continually*; let that *light shine alwayes*; let that *flood ever flow*, till it fall into the *Sea of Eternity*, where we shall according to our finite nature love him enough. We use to say, *Love me little and love me long*; but there we shall love him much and love him long, to all *Eternity*, and be like *Solomon's friend*, that loves at all times, and when all time is at an end.

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sometimes. p. 148. l. 17. for that r. the. p. 157. l. 3. for Luke  
r. Mark. p. 167. l. 3. r. we must do it. p. 172. l. 11. r. not  
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